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THE OVERHYPED DAVID PETRAEUS

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THE STRANGE EVOLUTION OF AN ITALIAN RADICAL

PAUL BERMAN

+

JONATHAN CHAIT *on* Fred Thompson

MICHAEL CROWLEY *on* John McCain

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THE NEW REPUBLIC

A Journal of Politics and the Arts

VOLUME 237 WASHINGTON, AUGUST 6, 2007 NUMBER 4,818

Getaway

In the ever-deepening quagmire that is the American political debate over the ever-deepening quagmire that is the war in Iraq, there is one thing, at least, that unites Democrats and Republicans: outrage over the Iraqi Parliament's decision to take off the month of August. Michigan Democrat Carl Levin deemed the break from work "unthinkable." Kentucky Republican Mitch McConnell proclaimed the Parliament "largely an embarrassment." Even President Bush, speaking in May to Republican lawmakers angry about the Iraqi Parliament's summer plans, said, "The vice president is over there to tell them, 'Do not go on vacation.'" To which we can only respond: How American! Because, while Iraqi lawmakers still have much to learn about democracy, they could certainly teach the United States a thing or two about leisure.

Americans, to put it bluntly, suck at vacationing. The problem, alas, is not that we are a nation of Clark Griswolds—the blue-socks-and-sandals-wearing Chevy Chase character who routinely mucks up his family's vacations. Griswold, for all the bumbling he does on his vacations, at least takes a lot of them (four movies' worth, in fact). Most Americans don't even do that. According to the World Tourism Organization, Americans average only 13 days of vacation per year, as compared with 42 days for Italians, 37 days for the French, and 34 days for Brazilians. Even our neighbors to the north, the ever-industrious Canadians, take double the number of vacation days per year that we do.

So what explains the American aversion to leisure? The Center for Economic and Policy Research's Rebecca Ray and John Schmitt blame the government. In their recent paper, "No-Vacation Nation," Ray and Schmitt survey 21 economically advanced countries and find that, while most in the group have a statutory minimum annual leave of about four weeks, "the United States is the only country in the group that does not require employers to provide paid leave." As a result, Ray and Schmitt report, "the average worker in the U.S. private sector receives only about nine days of paid leave and about six paid public holidays per year"; and, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, about 25 percent of American workers in the private sector do not get any paid vacation time at all. Making matters worse, Ray and Schmitt find that, in the absence of statutory requirements, the paid leave Americans do receive is distributed unequally—with lower-wage, part-time, and small-business workers likely to have the least. Contrast this with a country like Australia—which actually requires one *more* week of paid leave for its shift workers than for everyone else—and the backwardness of the American approach to vacation becomes more glaring still.

But, even if the U.S. government suddenly wised up and required private employers to offer paid leave on par with other advanced nations, there's no guarantee American employees would respond by making a beeline to their umbrella drinks. A recent survey by the employment firm Hudson found that more than 50 percent of American workers fail to take all the vacation days they do have, and 30 percent use less than half of them. Ironically, this dereliction of leisure is acute even among those most likely to own Hamptons beach houses and Aspen villas. In a recent article in *The Harvard Business Review*, Sylvia Ann Hewlett and Carolyn Buck Luce wrote about the "extreme jobs" phenomenon—in which high-income employees hold jobs that require them to work at least 60 hours per week and feature extensive travel, tight deadlines, and other similar characteristics. Among extreme-job holders, Hewlett and Buck found, 42 percent "take ten or fewer vacation days per year—far less time off than they are officially entitled to—and 55 percent claim they have had to cancel vacation plans 'regularly.' Moreover, they say no one is forcing them to do this." Indeed, what's most remarkable about these high-earning, vacation-skipping extreme-job holders is that, according to Hewlett and Buck, 66 percent of them wouldn't have it any other way. And if you can't count on the rich—the so-called leisure class—to take vacations, then who *can* you count on?

Flavio Morais

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Of course, our decrying of America's aversion to vacation will only do so much to solve this growing crisis. Which is why we're happy to say that, with the publication of this issue, The New Republic will try to do its part by joining those Iraqi M.P.s and taking some time off in August. It won't be the month our Baghdad brothers will enjoy, only seven days, but that means the next issue of TNR won't be published for another three weeks instead of the customary two. What you, dear reader, will do without TNR for that one week is hard to fathom, but we'd be remiss if we didn't offer one suggestion: Maybe you should take a vacation, too.

Inequities

Stephen Schwarzman, noted solipsist and private equity kingpin, was delivering a speech at the New York Stock Exchange last month when his cell phone rang. "There's a crisis going on," he said, then answered it. For the next few minutes, the audience was treated to a real-life case study in crisis management. Finally, Schwarzman returned to the podium and revealed the cause for his alarm. A terrorist attack? A market meltdown? A last-minute glitch in the iPhone? Not quite. Two senators had just introduced a bill requiring his firm—starting in 2012—to pay its fair share of taxes.

At the time, the Blackstone Group, which Schwarzman runs, was planning to raise some $4 billion in a public stock offering. (The actual amount came pretty close to that when the IPO happened in late June.) But, unlike most public companies—even those, such as investment banks, in essentially the same business—Blackstone would not have been subject to the corporate income tax on its profits. The loophole arises from a law that allows publicly traded partnerships to mostly avoid the 35 percent corporate tax so long as they generate the vast majority of their income from passive investments. (Partners pay only a 15 percent capital gains tax on profits remitted to them directly.)

Problem is, there is no English-language definition of the word "passive" that describes Blackstone's business model. The whole point of a private equity firm, after all, is to buy up undervalued companies and overhaul their operations. "Go and talk to the companies they buy," says Victor Fleischer, a tax expert at the University of Illinois. "They very much feel like [the ownership] is active." In weaker moments—like, say, its SEC filings—even Blackstone concedes as much.

The two senators, Democrat Max Baucus and Republican Chuck Grassley, want to fix this inequity by closing the loophole. Blackstone's defenders, meanwhile, trot out a fairness argument of their own. The logic, as summarized in a recent *Wall Street Journal* editorial, is that Blackstone makes its money from subsidiary companies. And, since those companies already pay corporate taxes on their own profits, it would be punitive to levy the tax a second time. Which might be true, if the subsidiary companies actually paid taxes. As it happens, Blackstone takes on so much debt when it buys them that their effective tax rate is negative (meaning they *receive* money from the government). Moreover, by the *Journal*'s logic, GM shouldn't pay the corporate tax, either, since it has already paid taxes on the glass and steel that it fashions into cars. Blackstone's management presumably thinks it's engaging in a productive economic activity—capital allocation—when it buys up companies. It's hard to see why profits from this activity should go largely untaxed. Finally, much of Blackstone's revenue comes from the *sale* of subsidiary companies, not their operations. Other public companies have to pay corporate taxes on profits from such sales. Blackstone gets to pay a far lower rate.

"A hallmark of corporate status is access to the capital markets," Grassley noted when introducing the legislation, which is currently awaiting a committee vote. "It's unfair to allow a publicly traded company to act like a corporation but not pay corporate tax." He's exactly right. No one is forcing Blackstone and its ilk to raise money from the public. If they do, they should bear the responsibilities that go with it. ◆

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Right Said Fred

Fred Thompson, humble country lobbyist.

JONATHAN CHAIT

The Republicans have decided that Fred Thompson is their man. I'm not sure how they arrived at this decision. Maybe they held a meeting at some secret mountaintop castle. Or perhaps there's some kind of GOP pheromone wafting through the air that most of us can't detect. (The latter theory might explain Chris Matthews's otherwise baffling on-air musing about Thompson: "Can you smell the English leather on this guy, the Aqua Velva, the sort of mature man's shaving cream, or whatever, you know, after he shaved? Do you smell that sort of—a little bit of cigar smoke?") Whatever it is, I'm convinced the decision has been made.

The best evidence for this is the equanimity with which conservatives have accepted the news that Thompson once worked as an abortion-rights lobbyist. Milder revelations about Rudy Giuliani and Mitt Romney were met with howls of outrage. The news that Thompson actively lobbied to weaken abortion restrictions, on the other hand, has been met with a shrug.

This free pass from conservatives is all the more remarkable given that it has had to hold firm through a series of unpersuasive explanations by Thompson's quasi-campaign. Phase One was straight denial. When the *Los Angeles Times* broke the abortion-lobbying story, Thompson's spokesman insisted, "Fred Thompson did not lobby for this group, period," and added, "There's no documents to prove it, there's no billing records, and Thompson says he has no recollection of it, says it didn't happen."

The next day, Thompson proceeded to Phase Two: Redneck Zen Quasi-Denial. "I'd just say the flies get bigger in the summertime," he declared. "I guess the flies are buzzing." Remarkably, this response seemed to work. Giuliani and Romney are probably kicking themselves that they didn't think to rebut straightforward factual allegations about *their* abortion records with some inscrutable pastoral aphorism. (Or does this only work for Southerners?)

A couple of days later, Thompson moved to Phase Three: spin. Thompson began gently explaining to his supporters that representing unsavory clients is just a normal part of being a lawyer. Thompson did not admit that he actually had represented a pro-choice group, but the inference was hard to miss. And, sure enough, twelve days later, *The New York Times* produced the billing records his spokesman had insisted did not exist.

This remains Thompson's current position. He's not denying he lobbied; he's just saying that, if he did, it doesn't mean he believed in what he was lobbying for. In a column he wrote for *Powerline*, one of the most widely read conservative blogs, Thompson waxed idealistic about the legal profession. "Every person, unpopular or not, is entitled to representation," he wrote, citing John Roberts: "That principle that you don't identify the lawyer with the particular views of the client, or the views that the lawyer advances on behalf of the client, is critical to the fair administration of justice."

It's true that this is a well-known legal principle, though lawyers often stretch it too far. (Yes, every defendant needs a lawyer, but no, the proper functioning of the legal system doesn't require Alan Dershowitz to fly across the country to defend O.J. Simpson.) But, even if we accept the maximal version of this principle, it's no defense of Thompson's work. The National Family Planning and Reproductive Health Association (NFPRHA) didn't hire him as a lawyer, it hired him as a lobbyist, and, while there's a constitutional right to the former, it doesn't extend (thank goodness) to the latter. Thompson's job wasn't to defend family planners charged with breaking the law that prohibits federally funded clinics from offering abortion counseling. His job was to persuade the Bush administration to change the law. His value had nothing to do with his legal skills and everything to do with his being the rare prominent Republican willing to represent a pro-choice group.

Indeed, it's a testament to just how poorly lobbyists are viewed that Thompson presenting himself as a lawyer is actually an improvement. Cast in just the right light—Thompson cites the legal careers of John Adams and Abraham Lincoln —it can almost look noble. Good ole Fred, humble country lawyer. Think Atticus Finch, not Jack Abramoff.

Thompson also has to pretend he was just a lawyer for the NFPRHA because, once you recognize that he worked as a lobbyist, his defense falls apart. Maybe a lawyer can ignore the actions or views of a client, but a lobbyist certainly shouldn't. Lobbying is a form of political activism. It pays well, which gives it a certain mercenary cast—"The practice of law is a business as well as a profession. It's the way you support your family," Thompson has written. But other forms of political activism pay well, too. If Thompson had accepted a lucrative job as a consultant to the Clinton campaign or chairman of the Democratic National Committee, would conservatives assume he was just representing his client?

Incredibly, Thompson's elementary conflation of lawyering and lobbying has satisfied nearly the entire conservative base. To the extent that conservatives are indignant, it's at the liberal media for reporting the story. "They seem to think that the story will somehow discredit Thompson among conservatives," fumed *Powerline*'s John Hinderaker, "presumably because conservatives are too dumb to understand how law firms and the legal process work." Well, *you* said it, not me.

Maybe the best explanation for conservatives' willingness to overlook Thompson's apostasy is that they're just tired of hearing about how every leading Republican contender either supports abortion rights or did in the not-too-distant past. "This is becoming so old," complained Tony Perkins of the Family Research Council. "They find somebody who has staked out a pro-life position, and the first thing they say is that he's supported a pro-abortion group."

Of course, it's becoming so old only because all the leading GOP contenders *have* supported pro-abortion groups. But, where conservative ire was once directed at the apostates themselves, now it's directed at the liberal media. Six months ago, conservatives scoffed at Mitt Romney's strained explanations, but now they swallow Thompson's giant whoppers without complaint. I guess the lies get bigger in the summertime. ◆

TRB
From Washington

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Buyer's Remorse

John McCain learns you can't un–sell out.

Claremont, New Hampshire

On a recent mid-July morning, John McCain bounded out of a silver SUV outside American Legion Post 29. So much for the cheering crowds—eagerly awaiting him was a gang of hecklers and fringe activists, including a 9/11 conspiracy theorist ("*Senator, are you a victim of mind control?*") and a man in a McCain mask dressed as a seaman and shaking a beggar's tin cup. A sign around his neck read: MY CAMPAIGN SPENDS LIKE A DRUNKEN SAILOR.

That, of course, was a reference to one of the worst campaign meltdowns ever—specifically, the fact that McCain has burned through nearly every penny of the $24 million his campaign has raised—leaving him bankrupt, hemorrhaging top staff, and humiliated. In Claremont, McCain was hoping to turn the page. He had come for a town-hall meeting with voters, the kind of unscripted forum crucial to his amazing 2000 New Hampshire primary win over George W. Bush. Back then, McCain lit up his town halls like a carnival barker. In 2000, the prevailing wisdom was that politics had become artificial, poll-tested, and money-infected—a perfect formula for McCain's self-proclaimed "reform crusade."

But these are different times. Sweating onstage in the stifling hall, McCain was peppered with questions about the slog in Iraq and his ties to Bush. "There is at least a perception … that you have become too close to President Bush and that you have supported him too often," fretted one man who identified himself as a McCain 2000 voter. In the face of this, McCain labored to summon the magic of yore. He repeatedly promised his audience "a little straight talk"—before offering some stale observations (the Iraq war was mismanaged, nuclear power can help slow global warming).What McCain didn't seem to understand is that advertising one's own candor is a bit like explaining a joke: It shouldn't be necessary. That he feels he has to, however, speaks volumes about how much McCain has changed since 2000.

In hindsight, McCain's decision to run for president as the "Republican establishment" candidate seems utterly ludicrous. It's true that, stylistically, McCain was far better-suited to a freewheeling, unscripted candidacy. But, beyond that, becoming an Establishment Man was an ideological absurdity. Even today, the extent of McCain's leftward shift during and after his last presidential run remains underappreciated. When he last ran for president, McCain denounced Bush's tax cuts as unaffordable and unfairly tilted toward the rich. He described a GOP corrupted by business lobbyists and hostage to "forces of evil" like Jerry Falwell and Pat Robertson. After his return to Congress, he went even further, championing a patients' bill of rights despised by the HMO industry and the Bush administration; pushing through a sweeping campaign finance reform bill that Bush signed unwillingly; enraging the NRA by pushing legislation to close the "gun show loophole"; and sounding the alarm over global warming. McCain even contemplated ditching the GOP altogether. In 2001, he discussed with Senate Democratic leaders the possibility of joining their party and mulled an independent presidential bid.

It's not surprising, then, that however hard McCain tried to repent, his heresies were simply too much for conservatives to forgive. But McCain also ditched the core component of his identity that

WHITE HOUSE WA *With* **DREW FRIEDMAN**

Dennis Kucinich's optimism explained.

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made him a rock star in the first place: his reform crusade. Political reform defined McCain's last candidacy; most inspiringly, McCain's heart truly seemed in it. Even as his 2000 campaign fizzled, McCain publicly vowed that his crusade would continue "tonight, tomorrow, the next day, the day after that, and for as long as it takes to restore America's confidence and pride in the practice and institutions of our great democracy."

But, as McCain sought to lead a GOP in more desperate need of reform than ever, he changed his tone. Talk of big money corrupting politics was shelved as his campaign plotted to drown its rivals in $100 million in fund-raising. McCain curtailed his famous Senate floor speeches attacking his colleagues' pork-barrel spending. ("You haven't read about his gratuitously taking on other members on the floor in the last six months, have you?" his now-departed senior adviser, John Weaver, boasted in *The New Yorker* two years ago.) McCain admirably led devastating hearings into the Jack Abramoff scandal but assured his fellow GOP lawmakers that his investigation would not spread beyond craven lobbyists to the politicians who enabled them.

McCain supporters argue that September 11 and the Iraq war crowded out the old reform spirit. "The world has changed, not John McCain," says one longtime associate. "People say he looks very somber," adds his old friend Orson Swindle. "But what has he been talking about? He's been talking about issues like the war, which is a pretty damn serious problem. People don't like to deal with those things. They liked the good-news Charlie."

So McCain is now bringing Charlie back—going "back to the campaign he ran last time," as the associate puts it. But that won't be easy. First of all, McCain is saddled with his steadfast support for the Iraq war. Though it seems probable that rivals like Mitt Romney will soon break for cover on the war, McCain is as dug in as ever. (His advisers don't even dare recommend otherwise, they say.) Instead, McCain could look for narrow points of difference. "I wouldn't advocate a break from Bush," says Scott Reed, a McCain-aligned GOP lobbyist. Instead, Reed says, McCain should emphasize positions like his opposition to keeping Guantánamo Bay open—a stance that also recalls his moving experience as a prisoner in Vietnam, which some advisers fear has faded from the public's memory. "That's part of who John McCain is. It's part of his life experience. And it allows him to depart from a very unpopular Bush position," Reed says. (In Claremont, at least, McCain's call to close Guantánamo and "never [to] torture people in our custody again" was the day's biggest applause line.)

One antidote to the grimness of Iraq is a strong return to reform as a theme. "John McCain will reform government," declared a bolded bullet point in a set of talking points recently distributed by his campaign. But, unlike in 2000, it's not clear that McCain really means it. In a July 23 speech in Michigan, McCain vowed to use presidential vetoes to rein in congressional spending and also to eliminate the alternative minimum tax's bite on middle-class families. But, while McCain spun both of those proposals as "reform," neither bears much resemblance to his Teddy Roosevelt–style crusading of 2000. (Backing middle-class tax cuts, which will expand the deficit, is hardly a model of political courage.) Meanwhile, McCain panned Democratic proposals to tax massive private-equity profits as income rather than capital gains. Shutting a tax loophole for hedge-fund billionaires during wartime? This once would have been a sweet-spot issue for McCain, who, borrowing from T.R., used to lament "the new malefactors of wealth." Instead, in Michigan, McCain sneered at the "fuss over 'reforming' the tax treatment of private equity firms" and the "mumbo jumbo" of Democrats trying to enact a "tax hike." Maybe standing up for hedge-fund managers really is McCain's idea of being a reformer. But it's hard to imagine many voters, particularly those who flocked to him in 2000, agreeing.

Michael Crowley

ANTHONY RUSSO; LEFT: JASON REED/REUTERS; CENTER AND RIGHT: SCOTT J. FERRELL/CONGRESSIONAL QUARTERLY; ALL NEWSCOM

Occupational Hazard

The other failed invasion.

"Take off your veil!" the Somali soldier shouted at the woman in the mostly empty street. Steadying his assault rifle with his right hand, he ripped away the woman's black *niqab* with his left. "Why are you coming so close to us? You have explosives?" He leveled the muzzle of his gun against the bridge of her nose. Her mouth, suddenly embarrassed and exposed, broke into a jester's forced grin.

"I just want a juice," she pleaded. Except for a handful of armed soldiers, the only other person on the deserted street was a man selling mango juice from behind a table. (A few weeks earlier, the stall he had operated for 14 years had been blown up.) The woman held up her empty palms and backed away. The soldiers let her be and hustled back to their waiting Jeep.

We were in Tawfiq, the most contested neighborhood of Mogadishu, where soldiers of the current Somali government are busy trying to root out militia members of the Union of Islamic Courts (UIC),

Anastasia Vasilakis

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which ruled Mogadishu for six months last year and managed to bring relative peace for the first time in 16 years. It was overthrown late last year by a force sent by neighboring Ethiopia with America's tacit blessing. Now the UIC's military wing, the *shebab* ("youth"), has retreated into a maze of shallow bunkers and sandy berms in the Tawfiq neighborhood from which the Islamist group drew most of its local support. A sign on a daub wall nearby advertised the (now closed) NEW FALLUJA CAFÉ—named after the Iraqi city razed by the Americans in late 2004 where the insurgency continues to simmer.

The government soldiers' overreaction to the woman buying juice is at least somewhat understandable. The first real suicide bomber in Somalia's history blew himself up last September, in a failed attempt to assassinate President Abdullahi Yusuf Ahmed, whom many Somalis see as a puppet of Ethiopia and, by proxy, the United States. Since then, suicide bombers have detonated every few months.

During its brief tenure, the UIC had defeated Mogadishu's U.S.-backed warlords and quelled the clan divisions that riddle Somali life. It also set up *sharia* courts to administer justice and instill order in the name of Islam. To some degree, it worked. Somalis backed the UIC less for religious reasons than because, for the first time in almost two decades, Mogadishu wasn't a free-fire zone.

But the UIC had a much darker side: The *shebab* dug up and tossed out the bones of more than 700 dead Italians from an "infidel" cemetery and forced men to shave their heads as punishment for un-Islamic hairdos. They banned watching the World Cup and chewing the popular leafy stimulant *qat*. The head of the UIC's shura council, Sheik Hassan Aweys, was the military leader of Al Ittihad Al Islami, which launched several attacks against Ethiopia in the 1990s and had links to Al Qaeda. Also, in the second half of 2006, hundreds of foreign fighters reportedly arrived in Somalia to fight alongside the *shebab*. The UIC harbored several members of Al Qaeda, including Fazul Abdullah Mohammed, the elusive mastermind reportedly behind the 1998 U.S. Embassy bombings in neighboring Kenya and Tanzania, which killed 225 people.

And so, last Christmas Eve, the Christian-led government of Ethiopia invaded and—supported, later, by U.S. air strikes—successfully dislodged the Islamist UIC, largely because it believed (correctly) that rebels backed by its enemy, Eritrea, were using Somalia as a staging area for attacks. The result is an occupation by Ethiopian soldiers that fuels the local insurgency, threatens to destabilize the Horn of Africa, and offers Al Qaeda an additional talking point in its campaign to persuade Muslims that the West has declared war upon them. Many of the region's Muslims saw the Ethiopian invasion as a Christmas present from Ethiopia's leaders to America's. "When the Americans started backing the Ethiopians around Christmas," one woman who supported the courts said, "we started calling the Ethiopians *kafir*, or infidels."

"The occupation in Somalia is having roughly the same effect as in parts of Iraq," John Prendergast, an analyst at the International Crisis Group and founder of the ENOUGH Project, says. "We know by now that the one thing that unifies Somalis and brings them into the streets for guerrilla-style operations is occupation." In other words, Somalia is shaping up to be a third blundered front, after Afghanistan and Iraq, in the war on terrorism.

AS IN IRAQ, the overthrow of the UIC government has left widespread chaos in its wake. In the streets of Mogadishu, grazing cows and children sniffing glue compete to eat from piles of garbage. *Qat* is back too: Few dare to travel after 3 p.m., the hour at which government soldiers begin to chew. While *qat* is ostensibly a stimulant, the glassy, pink eyes of soldiers in the late afternoon, and their indifference to pulling the triggers of their automatic weapons, make it seem a soporific.

Casualties from the occupation and insurgency fill the 60 beds of a local hospital. When I visited, I met Abdi Ghani Mohammed Ali, a 30-year-old English teacher who clutched the drainage tube protruding from his abdomen. Out of work since war shut his school some months ago, Abdi sold mobile phones to Ethiopian soldiers to support his family. One day, he told me, the Ethiopians shot him, stole $1,000, and left him in the street to die. An 18-year-old boy had been admitted to the hospital several days earlier bleeding from his rectum. He had been gang-raped by government soldiers who belonged to one of Somalia's rival clans. ("It's not sexual; it's about power," an onlooker said.) A woman in intensive care was waiting for her sister, shot during a carjacking, to wake from a coma. "Under the Islamic courts," she said, "it wasn't possible for anyone to do this." Meanwhile, in the crowded room next door, a woman named Rogia poked at the cast on her right knee, where she had been shot by an Ethiopian sniper. "The Ethiopians hate our religion," she said. The hospital's one doctor was slightly embarrassed but translated for her nonetheless: "Muslims wouldn't do anything like this."

This is certainly how Al Qaeda would like the world's 1.3 billion Muslims to view what's happening in Somalia. In early 2007, Ayman Al Zawahiri called for attacks against the occupying Ethiopian soldiers using "ambushes, mines, raids, and martyrdom-seeking campaigns to devour them as the lions devour their prey." But his message wasn't meant

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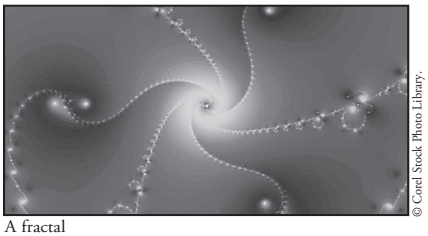

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merely for Somali ears; it was also intended to inflame Muslims worldwide by suggesting, once again, that the Christian West is at war with Islam.

Al Qaeda's interest in Somalia dates back to the early '90s, when, according to a recent report by the Combating Terrorism Center at West Point, an "Africa Corps" made up of a dozen or so Al Qaeda members set out for Mogadishu from nearby Sudan. "Al Qaeda saw Somalia as being really crucial long before the U.S. did," explains Lawrence Wright, author of *The Looming Tower*. "They look at the Horn of Africa as the gateway to the Red Sea: Egypt and Saudi Arabia are their main prizes." But, like the American peacekeepers sent by President Clinton in the early '90s, Al Qaeda's Africa Corps members found the failed state too problematic to build the infrastructure they needed. Their jihad ideology, moreover, was a tough sell among the Sufi-influenced Somalis, and it was hard to tear militants away from their clan loyalties and salaries. The Africa Corps letters make fascinating reading, tracing the evolution of Al Qaeda's mission from combating Somali communism to confronting "crusaders."

Al Qaeda has claimed some public relations victories in Somalia, notably Osama bin Laden's boast that his foot soldiers helped to bring down a Black Hawk helicopter and kill 18 American Rangers in Mogadishu in October 1993. That attack, he bragged later, set the "paper tiger" of the United States alight. And, as terrorism expert (and TNR contributor) Peter Bergen notes, Al Qaeda's first act of terrorism, the 1992 bombing of a hotel in Aden, Yemen, targeted American soldiers staying there—soldiers on their way to Somalia. "Al Qaeda saw Somalia as part of the American grab for Muslim lands that began in Saudi Arabia," Bergen says. "When you talk about 'cutting off the head of the snake,' where do you begin? Somalia."

In the end, though, resentment toward the U.S.-backed occupation may prove to be a greater destabilizing force for the entire region than Al Qaeda ever was, especially in Kenya, where the war on terrorism is directly linked to the rise of radical Islamic identity. In the name of chasing a few bad men, the Christmas invasion played into millennia of distrust between predominantly Christian Ethiopia (40–50 percent of the population is Muslim) and Somalia, which is almost 100 percent Muslim. "The popular perception is that Christian soldiers are occupying a Muslim land," says Roland Marchal, a senior research fellow at Sciences-Po in Paris.

Ethiopians see Somalia as a haven for Islamic militants and insurgents backed by Eritrea, which would like to overthrow the repressive Ethiopian regime. But they also play up this analysis to encourage U.S. backing for their efforts to destroy the rebels. In 2002, during a visit by Senator Arlen Specter, Ethiopian President Meles Zenawi called the U.S. war on terrorism "something of a godsend." As Ethiopian Envoy to Somalia Fesaha Shawal recently explained, "Ethiopia and America have a common strategy, a common thinking, and a common enemy."

It's a point on which both sides concur. Ahmed Mohammed Hashim, an emaciated 25-year-old *shebab* foot soldier, told me, "Ethiopia is our first enemy. Right now, they go into our mosques with their shoes on; they shit and pee there." Second is the Ethiopia-backed interim government, "because it is illegitimate." And third: "America. America is the father of our enemy. America is using the Ethiopians to take over our country, and we're against them."

When I visited one head of the interim government, Prime Minister Ali Mohammed Gedi, at his home, he argued that the de facto alliance between Ethiopia and the United States would eventually work to everyone's benefit. Surrounded by armed, glowering teenagers belonging to his clan in the heavily fortified Mogadishu neighborhood that one Somali journalist called the Lime Zone (to Baghdad's Green), Gedi told me: "The United States government is *very* cooperative. … Somalia is a very important country from a geopolitical point of view in the war on terror."

A few hours later, a suicide truck bomber crashed through the gate of his compound, killing six people and injuring ten more. The prime minister was rushed to an undisclosed location. It was at least the third attempt on his life, and a great opportunity for spin. Soon after, my phone rang. It was the prime minister calling me directly—apart from the photographer Seamus Murphy, I was evidently the only Western journalist in Mogadishu. "This bombing will make the international community pay attention," he told me. "It is the mark of Al Qaeda."

ELIZA GRISWOLD

Eliza Griswold is a fellow at the New America Foundation and the author of a recent collection of poems, WIDEAWAKE FIELD.

Liberal Reading

Taking back the Constitution.

The last Supreme Court term—with its tide-turning decisions on abortion, race, and campaign finance—has evoked familiar feelings for liberals. Just like the Democratic electoral defeats of the 1980s, not to mention the catastrophes of 1994 and 2000, these losses have triggered despair and introspection. As *The New York Times*' Linda Greenhouse has reported, liberals have begun to question their tactics for combating the conservative judicial revolution; they realize they must now develop "an affirmative message of what the Constitution means" after "playing defense for close to 40 years."

History, fortunately, provides examples that should give liberals heart. Over the course of the past few decades, the Democratic Party has changed its rhetoric and tweaked its positions to improve its chances of winning arguments over national security and social issues—and it needs to now replicate these feats in debates over the Constitution.

Consider a particularly graphic instance of how Republicans have whipped Democrats on this terrain. When John Kerry described the paradigm that would guide his judicial appointments, he spoke of appointing judges who would ensure equal pay for women and protect a woman's right to reproductive choice. That sounded well and good—until George W. Bush portrayed him as betraying the Constitution. Where Kerry wanted to turn the courts into a vehicle for liberal causes, Bush pronounced himself a "strict constructionist," who would appoint judges who "interpret the Constitution," not make laws. It's not hard to see how Bush's arguments tracked the broader Republican case: Unlike the Democratic elites who manipulate the system to their own advantage, conservatives safeguard bedrock American values.

To win these debates in the next election, liberals are going to have to borrow from Justice Antonin Scalia and the conservative lexicon. They should embrace the Constitution without hesitation and promise to appoint judges who

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Then & NOW

What Questions Should Our Politicians Be Asking About Iraq?

2003 Al Qaeda was not fighting or attacking anyone in Iraq.

2007 "Al Qaeda Strikes Back," by Bruce Riedel, *Foreign Affairs*, May/June 2007, states in part: "The U.S. invasion of Iraq … played directly into the hands of al Qaeda leaders. … In Iraq, Zarqawi adopted … strategy to alienate U.S. allies and destabilize the country. … More important, he focused on the fault line in Iraq society—the divide between Sunnis and Shiites—with the

[G]oal of precipitating a civil war."

Examples: Al Qaeda, through the use of foreign fighters and Sunni insurgents, organized and attacked Shia leaders, holy sites (Golden Mosque in Samarra), and civilians and assassinated prominent religious leaders. The Shia responded with violence.

The cycle of violence was started.

Add this cycle to an overlay of mistakes by Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld, Provisional Authority leader L. Paul Bremer, and others (disbanding the Iraq Army, providing insufficient American troops, and contributing to rising unemployment—which is still 40% to 60%), President George W. Bush (who disregarded General Shinseki's call for more troops, and Senator McCain's and Senator Biden's calls for more troops and for the replacement of Secretary Rumsfeld) and:

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The Iraq Study Group Report

stated on page eight how we should treat them: "If the Iraqi government does not make substantial progress toward the achievement of milestone on national reconciliation, security, and governance, the United States should reduce its political, military, or economic support for the Iraqi government."

Do not blame Iraq.

The United States started and won the war, then we were attacked by Al Qaeda and its surrogates in Iraq. The war can be won. For example, The United States has started a program in Anbar Province to turn the Sunni against Al Qaeda. Al Qaeda is now attacking the Sunni Leaders. *Foreign Affairs* (ibid): "Decisively defeating al Qaeda will be more difficult now than it would have been a few years ago.

But it still can be done."

Foreign Affairs (ibid): "For the last several years, al Qaeda's priority has been to bleed the U. S. In Afghanistan and Iraq. Striking on United States soil has been a lesser goal. If al Qaeda survives,

[S]ooner or later it will attack the U.S. homeland again."

We are in a world war with Islamic extremism. It did not start when we entered Iraq, nor will it end if we leave. Politicians should not ask what we can do to get out of Iraq, but

what must we do to win in Iraq?

How can one say we should leave if one has not asked this question?

Are You Qualified To Lead If You Will Not Ask This Question?

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will follow the commands of the Constitution. Then they should go after Republicans, hard, for not doing the same. In other words, they should portray themselves as the authentic defenders of the Constitution. It won't be easy, of course, to eradicate old perceptions. But they will have certain advantages in making their case. Namely, when they drape themselves in the Constitution, they will have history on their side.

For more than a decade, conservatives, led by Scalia, have offered a simple and compelling recipe: Follow the text of the Constitution. Where the words of the document are unclear, consult history to determine the original understanding of those words. Apply that original understanding to the facts of the case, and presto: The right result will pop out. As Scalia likes to say, constitutional interpretation should be "easy as pie." The benefits, moreover, carry far beyond individual cases. According to Scalia, this approach ensures that politics never enters constitutional law.

Liberals have long known that Scalia does not always practice what he preaches. In Scalia's hands, the Founding Fathers strangely presaged the present-day Republican Party platform with remarkable precision. But, while liberals have grumbled in classrooms and academic journals about Scalia's flamboyant mix of sanctimony and hypocrisy, he has faced only one real combatant with the intellect and megaphone to give him a fair fight: Justice Stephen Breyer. In his book, *Active Liberty*, Breyer spells out his own approach to judging. He has also engaged in public debates with Scalia about constitutional interpretation.

Breyer is an extremely intelligent, lively, and thoroughly decent man. He is also an excellent and largely nondoctrinaire justice. But even those rooting for Breyer, like us, would have to concede that Scalia has won their public matches.

These triumphs can be attributed, in no small measure, to style. Scalia talks in hard-hitting sound bites, Breyer in erudite paragraphs. While Scalia launches blistering criticisms of Supreme Court liberals, Breyer is calm, restrained, and unwilling to challenge Scalia on his rulings in particular cases.

But, more than anything, Breyer has lost these debates because of the terms upon which they were fought. As Scalia describes his "easy as pie" originalist recipe, you can hear the exasperation pour out of Breyer. Judging is a lot more complicated than that, he sighs. Texts are frequently ambiguous. (When he once began to ruminate on the many possible meanings of the word "other," Scalia interjected that he thought the meaning of "other" was pretty clear.) History is equally malleable. Thus, Breyer explained, he looks to other factors, including the real-world consequences of particular rulings. It is intellectually persuasive, but it also leans into Scalia's counterpunch. Scalia retorts that consequences are in the eye of the judicial beholder and liberal justices tend to bend their evaluations of the "real world" to fit their political preferences.

One can dismiss Scalian logic as simplistic and deeply flawed, but it tends to prevail, as it did in the Senate confirmation hearings for John Roberts and Samuel Alito. While Democratic senators searched for evidence of Roberts's core beliefs, Roberts likened the job of a justice to a baseball umpire, simply calling balls and strikes. Democrats pushed Alito on his willingness to protect the little guy; Alito said he would be happy to rule for the little guy, but only when the little guy had a winning legal position. The conservative nominees looked like they cared about the rule of law. Liberals looked like they cared about bending the law for politically favorable results. The nominees made it seem like following the rule of law was easy—ball or strike. The liberal senators made the whole enterprise seem much more muddled.

Debate by debate, conservatives have been persuading the public that they alone are interested in following the Constitution. At one level, this is remarkable. Demonstrating the hypocrisy and activism of conservatives like Scalia ought to be, well, easy as pie. On another level, the conservative success is not hard to understand. Progressives have painted themselves into a corner by running away from the text and history of the Constitution for fear that the original meaning of the Constitution would require the abandonment of progressive causes and principles.

ANTHONY RUSSO

But what if progressives tried another tack? What if they stopped accusing Scalia and his ilk of intellectual simplicity and instead accused them of being unfaithful to the Constitution? Suppose that they pointed out where neither text nor history supports the results conservatives say they support? Suppose they even charged that conservatives ignore the Constitution when it gets in their way? Now that would be a fair fight.

Indeed, there's a nascent movement among progressives to embrace the Constitution rather than run from it. The central theorist of this school—what you might call progressive originalism—is

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WHAT THEY WERE THINKING

"As you can see, Mr. President, the acid bath eats away all the inconvenient parts of the Constitution." —suggested by TNR ONLINE commenter drdannyu, winner of a contest to write the best caption for this photo

PHOTO BY MARTIN H. SIMON-POOL/GETTY IMAGES

Yale law professor Akhil Reed Amar. Amar is one of his generation's most influential constitutional historians. His works on the Constitution have won acclaim from across the political spectrum, with one prominent conservative law professor calling Amar's recent opus, *America's Constitution: A Biography*, the best book written about the Constitution since *The Federalist Papers*. This conservative acclaim is somewhat surprising, because Amar reveals the Constitution to be a deeply progressive document.

Over the years, conservatives have convinced many liberals—not to mention the public—that the Constitution is a document largely geared towards protecting private property and wealth. Amar demolishes this notion. He explains that our Constitution started out both democratic and inclusive for its time and has remained viable because of constitutional amendments that improved the document.

Amar's most powerful argument is that the post–Civil War amendments fundamentally altered our founding document in ways that have yet to be recognized by the Supreme Court. What may have begun as a document focused on protecting liberty was transformed into a document just as concerned with equality. A federal government that began with powers that were "few and defined" was awarded vast new powers to protect due process and equal protection. Conservatives may not like this, of course, but they should not be able to wish away these changes.

This approach may not sound terribly revolutionary. But once liberals understand that the Constitution is a progressive document, it will transform the way in which they argue. Consider the one big liberal victory last term—the ruling that the Environmental Protection Agency has the authority to combat global warming. Justice Anthony Kennedy joined the Court's liberal wing in that case because of his conclusion, rooted in constitutional history, that states warrant special solicitude when they challenge federal government inaction. It might have been a persuasive point, but it wasn't made in any of the briefs filed in the case—a symptom of the progressive aversion to this style of argument.

Or take the thorniest of issues—reproductive choice. The fear that a constitutional vision rooted in text and history would mean jettisoning *Roe* v. *Wade* pushes liberals away from such a vision. But Jack Balkin, also of Yale Law School, advocates a different approach. Balkin was once a critic of originalism, but, in an important article, "Abortion and Original Meaning," Balkin embraces "fidelity to the original meaning of the Constitution," and argues that the text and history of the citizenship clause of the Fourteenth Amendment supports *Roe*. Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg appears to have picked up this argument in her dissent to the recent partial-birth abortion case. She asserted that the right to reproductive choice is not rooted in a "generalized notion of privacy" but rather in a woman's "equal citizenship stature." What Balkin and Ginsburg realize is that *Roe* will only survive if progressives convince the Court and the public that the right to reproductive choice is rooted in our founding document.

Of course, the Constitution's text and history does not line up perfectly with a progressive agenda. Constitutional text and history, moreover, will not provide precise answers to many questions confronted by courts. But, faced with these complications and uncertainties, progressives would do well to follow Scalia's lead. In public debates over constitutional interpretation, Scalia keeps it simple. Sure, he says, sometimes I have to follow precedent. Sure, he admits, sometimes text and history aren't so clear. But those are details. Don't let them distract you: I like a rock-hard Constitution, plain and simple, and that Constitution binds me as a judge.

That's the way Clinton, Obama, and other Democratic candidates ought to talk about their own constitutional vision. They can eschew terms like originalism, if they don't like its baggage. But they should say something similarly evocative: "I want judges who are accountable to the Constitution, not the Democratic or Republican platform." They should be prepared to explain what they mean by constitutional accountability, and they should provide examples of where conservative judges have violated this mandate. They should talk about the Constitution and its history, but resist the impulse to discuss the hardest cases first and avoid getting bogged down in the details of philosophy. They must recognize that there is a big difference between defending a constitutional vision and deciding a case. The progressive failure to grasp that difference is precisely why they've been losing these battles.

DOUGLAS T. KENDALL AND JAMES E. RYAN

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The Convert

The death of an anarchist, the murder of a police chief, and the remaking of the European left.

PAUL BERMAN

In June 2006, the Italian publisher Einaudi brought out a pamphlet by the journalist Christian Rocca, and, to give the book a proper send-off, the publishing house and Rocca's newspaper, *Il Foglio*, sponsored a panel discussion in Rome, at the Cinema Capranichetta. Rocca's book carried the mischievous title *Cambiare Regime: La sinistra e gli ultimi 45 dittatori*, or *Regime Change: The Left and the Last 45 Dictators*—which faithfully broadcast his intention of heaping criticisms and ironies on the modern left and its fond tolerance (as he insisted on saying) for dreadful dictatorships of various sorts. The author took a seat at the front of the theater, plainly ready to continue his assault, and the panelists, a little group of political people and journalists from Rome and Milan and the far-away English-speaking corners of the world, took their places around him. Yet the agitation in the rows of movie theater seats, the faces craning forward for a better look, the cameramen and reporters waving their bazooka lenses and micro-tape recorders, the politicians pacing at the entryway in the rear—this, the jumpy atmosphere at the Capranichetta, seemed focused almost entirely to the side, on a shy figure seated modestly against the wall, as if holding himself apart: the final guest on Rocca's bookish panel.

This last person was Adriano Sofri, and the audience and the journalists peered at him out of a curiosity so deep as to lie, like an archeological site, in layers. Every political-minded person in Italy had been reading Sofri's newspaper columns for decades. Yet, during the past 18 years, the public had seen him in the flesh only during his intervals out of jail; and, during the last six years, the public had seen him not at all. Here he was, though, trim, silver-haired, wan—at liberty to participate because, owing to his health, the prison authorities had granted him a medical parole; and now he had recuperated in some degree, and, so far, no one had ordered him back to jail. And then Italy's elections had taken place, and Silvio Berlusconi and his right-wing allies had gone down to defeat, and the brand-new government turned out to be a left-wing coalition, and it seemed likely, with the left in power, that nobody would, in fact, order Sofri back to jail. So the audience and the journalists peered—eager to see the face behind the bylines, how he was bearing up, how he had aged. Or they wanted to dwell on the spectacle of human tragedy, which may be a morbid thing to do, but irresistible. Or they peered for still another reason, which, in the end, did have to do with Rocca's book and his punchy political criticisms—peered at Sofri in the hope of unraveling a few mysteries of modern life, not just in regard to crime and punishment but in regard to the left and its political philosophy and tangled evolutions.

Ideological apostate Adriano Sofri (right) with fellow liberal Piero Fassino.

AP PHOTO/SANDRO PACE

As late as the 1980s, everyone could have described the political left without much difficulty. The left—and by the left I mean whole swathes of modern politics, not just in Italy but everywhere in the modern democracies—was the heir to the nineteenth-century workers' movement. The left stood for the veneration of labor and the demands of social solidarity—stood for the oppressed against the oppressors; the colonized against the colonizers; the victims of irrational hatreds against the irrational haters. The left stood for the dynamic idea that political action could change the world, and mankind did not have to wait around for God or providence or the "invisible hand" to make life a little better. More: The left, on its radical wing, stood for the idea of a wholly alternative society—the superior world that already existed in the Soviet Union (as a great many left-wing Italians supposed); or could be imagined in the future, if only because the Soviet Union, for all its deplorable qualities, demonstrated that alternatives were feasible; or could at least be pictured as a utopian aspiration, suspended timelessly in the political imagination.

But that was 20 years ago. In the spring of 2006 at the Cinema Capranichetta, it was no longer obvious what the modern left believed, deep in its moldy heart. Everyone knew that, over the decades since the Soviet collapse, the political left had undergone a gigantic modernization, almost everywhere around the world. But in exactly which ways? A reasonable person could wonder if the political left, in Italy or anywhere else, had made a permanent peace with modern economics. Or was the peace only temporary? Maybe the political left continued to harbor a secret hope that some kind of alternative method of analyzing trade and production might still be discovered, as if by Marxist scientists toiling midnights at the lab. The left of the long-ago storied past had fought against the Christian tyrannies of the feudal age and, in more recent ages, had fought against the fascist currents of the European far-right. No one could doubt that, in the present age as well, the political left would fight tooth and claw against any modern resurgence of priestly oppression or fascism in Europe, so long as the resurgent priests and fascists looked exactly like their counterparts of long ago. But there was reason to wonder: Could the modern left be counted on to put up any fight at all against religious bigots and fascist-style militias dressed in newer costumes, invoking some less familiar theology? And how did the modern left, the left of the Western countries, feel about

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putting up a struggle against oppressive regimes in other parts of the world? There was reason to wonder if the modern left hadn't become a force for a conservative social order—a political tendency dedicated to a see-no-evil outlook on world events and a gated-community vision of the good society, intended to thrive in the West and nowhere else. People did ask those questions, and they did so around the world and not just in Italy.

Then again, someone might regard the questions I have just reported as nothing more than slanders from the political right. Maybe the big problem facing the modern left resided largely in the unlucky fact that some of its own militants and theoreticians, out of frustrated ambition or a foolish taste for adopting dramatic poses, had set about perversely reinforcing the right-wing criticisms, and the renegades ought to be made to retract and apologize, under threat of expulsion. A demand for apologies had been all the rage in some quarters recently.

Christian Rocca in *Regime Change* went about presenting his own opinions on these topics in a cheerfully perky manner. Rocca took the view that democratic countries ought to promote democratic movements in non-democratic parts of the world. He looked on democratic movements abroad as a grand-scale solution to world problems. And, having laid out his prescription, he compressed his several points into a neat polemic and hurled it at the mainstream left in Italy—at an Italian left that, in years gone by, had mostly wanted to advance the cause of Communism at home and around the world and, in more recent times, had never entirely settled on a coherent notion of an ethical foreign policy. And he seemed to enjoy making his case, as if confident that his was the vanguard position and everyone else's a doomed vestige of a disappearing past.

These arguments of his, though: Did they represent a sympathetic criticism with left-wing qualities of its own, or was this book of his one more horrendous right-wing diatribe? The answer might not have been instantly obvious to someone listening at the Capranichetta or thumbing through the book. Rocca wrote admiringly about some of the neocons in the United States. Then again, he also invoked the long tradition of the anti-totalitarian left in Italy—a minuscule tradition, demographically speaking, and yet grand enough, morally speaking. He loved to quote Carlo Roselli, the theoretician of "liberal socialism" in the 1920s, and Roselli's words sounded very nearly like a humanitarian interventionist argument from our own era, which was curious to see—a suggestion that even the most modern of calls for left-wing modernization may be older than we think.

Rocca's publisher, Einaudi, lent his book still more vestigial left-wing prestige, if only because, back in the 1960s and '70s, the Einaudi house used to bring out all kinds of Marxist tracts. Still, Marxism at Einaudi was, by now, mostly a backlist item. And everyone knew that Rocca's newspaper, *Il Foglio*, was, in a very peculiar manner, a journal of the pugnacious right. At the Cinema Capranichetta, *Il Foglio*'s editor, Giuliano Ferrara, seated himself directly behind his own journalist, in plain display of his proprietary authority. Yet who was Giuliano Ferrara? Here was a man, as someone observed in the course of the discussion, who embodied a curiously up-to-date left-right coalition in his own imposing person, stretching from his background in the upper ranks of the Italian Communist Party to his Berlusconian politics in the present day—possibly the only example anywhere in the world of a prominent left-wing leader who, in defecting rightward, had managed, through heroic feats of affability and the occasional ambiguity, to hold on to a fair number of his left-wing friends.

The English-speaking delegation at the cinema discussion included Christopher Hitchens and myself. But the liveliest of the English-language participants was the British journalist John Lloyd—a blunt and unapologetic admirer of Tony Blair. Lloyd addressed the audience in a marvelously Scottish-accented Italian that veered into an equally marvelous Scottish-accented English, quite as if language itself, in Lloyd's version, had acquired the hyphenated quality of an unlikely coalition. Lloyd described to the audience a document called the Euston Manifesto—a brand-new British entry at that particular moment into the worldwide dispute about the left. The Euston Manifesto called for a left-wing or liberal reformation—a "new political alignment." A neo-left, to put it that way. The manifesto summoned the neo-left to stand against tyrannies and oppressions of every sort, regardless of their ideological colors. Instead of a ritualized loathing for the conservative right, a systematic hostility to actual oppression—that was the proposed new idea. The manifesto denounced racism, and this was nothing remarkable, except that, having denounced racism in general, it went on to denounce anti-Semitism in particular—which was an intrepid thing to do in the modern environment, and triply so in the self-assured world of the British journalists and academics, where denunciations of Israel, Zionism, the "Jewish lobby," and the Israeli professoriate have been de rigueur. And then, with the wind in its sails, the Euston Manifesto raised the issue of anti-Americanism and openly deplored the popular and simple-minded left-wing instinct to attribute all of the world's ills to the crimes and greed of a single country. And this, the argument against anti-Americanism, was surely the nub. For what is the ultimate purpose of the political left, after all? If the purpose is to lead a campaign against American power, then naturally the left will rise in solidarity with the victims of America, together with the victims of America's outpost in the non-Western world, Israel, and the left will find itself stirred to action on behalf of certain kinds of suffering, but not other kinds—the sufferings of the oppressed Palestinians, say, but not of the Chechens, the Kurds, or the Iraqi Shia. The Euston Manifesto argued against this sort of selectivity.

The manifesto came out of a small, slightly Internet-crazed cranny of the British liberal left, and yet the authors had succeeded in attracting a fair amount of mainstream attention, persuading a number of well-known people and members of Parliament in Britain to affix their signatures—people on the left who had supported the Iraq war in 2003, or who had opposed it, but, who, in either case, agreed on a principle of solidarity in the aftermath. One of the authors, the journalist Nick Cohen, later published a lively book of his own called *What's Left?: How the Liberals Lost Their Way*, describing the manifesto and expanding on its complaints and criticisms. And Cohen's strictly British polemic somehow struck a note that audibly resembled Rocca's Italian tract—a note of social indignation on behalf of the oppressed, doubled by a note of additional indignation at the people who selectively claim to be socially indignant. Rocca was, politically speaking, a grandson of Carlo Roselli, and Cohen of George Orwell; and Roselli's legacy and Orwell's looked pretty much the same, in the writings of their respective ideological descendants. In short, the "new political alignment" turned out to be an international affair, at least among the journalists.

Nor were the Italians and the British entirely alone. In those same months when Rocca's book and the Euston Manifesto came out, a group of people in France called the Circle of the Anti-Totalitarian Left brought out a new square-backed journal called *Le Meilleur des Mondes*, which is how the French translate *Brave New World*. André Glucks-

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mann was the titular chairman of the journal's publishing committee, and he contributed a playful interview with Immanuel Kant, whom he pictured having lately moved to Baghdad. Bernard Kouchner, the Socialist, contributed a long interview—and all of this made a perfect fit with Rocca's book, though no one was coordinating these different groups.

But what did any of this amount to, politically speaking? The panel at the Cinema Capranichetta included one man of genuine power, and this was Piero Fassino, the national secretary of Italy's Party of the Democrats of the Left. The Democrats of the Left were the dominant partner in the left-wing coalition that had just then triumphed in the elections, which meant that Fassino was a crucial figure in the new government. During his turn at the mike, Fassino made clear that he was not entirely in step with Christian Rocca or with left-wing ideas from the right-wing *Foglio*. Most of the panelists at the movie theater had supported, with varying degrees of fervor or reluctance, the Iraq invasion in 2003. But not Fassino, and he reminded the audience of his opposition.

Even so, he did not come to the theater in order to thump on his antiwar chest. He made no accusations and demanded no apologies. He wanted everyone to remember that, even if he did oppose the Iraq intervention, he was by no means an opponent of military interventions per se. Back in the '90s, he had supported NATO's intervention in the Balkans, which was a brave thing to do for a leader of the mainstream left, and he wanted everyone to recognize that, in more recent times, he had never reverted to the antiwar sectarianism of the past. He threw a few gibes at Rocca, but he honored him, too. And he took Rocca's arguments seriously. The case for democracy promotion seemed to Fassino ethical and attractive, on balance—even if, having expressed his sympathetic estimation, he deftly erected a wall of cautious qualifications around his remarks, just in case anyone might imagine that he was veering in Bush-like directions.

And all of this was fascinating to observe, not just because of the political urgencies of that particular moment—the contingencies of Italian elections, the catastrophes in Iraq, the continuing crisis in trans-Atlantic relations. There was Fassino's party affiliation to consider, and the nimbus of prestige that hovered around his party and its history—this party which, for several decades after World War II, had been, until it changed its name and ideology, the largest, most popular Communist Party anywhere in the West. A great many ardent Marxist hopes all over the world used to rest on Italian Communism and its visible prospects—ardent hopes that Communist movements everywhere might win the kind of working-class support that Italy's Communists genuinely enjoyed; and equally ardent hopes that Communism's future triumphs might turn out to be balmier and more Mediterranean, Italian-style, than anything to be seen in the already existing Siberian variety.

And yet Fassino's party, or at least its principal faction, had ended up launching its own program of self-modernization, cautiously at first, then more ambitiously, until, in the first years after 1989, the party agreed pretty much to dispense with Communist ideas altogether and, by 1991, the name as well—a remarkable self-renegation, noticed and sometimes imitated all over the world. If there was a symbol anywhere on earth of the tradition-minded ancient left and its willingness to think anew, this was surely the former Italian Communist Party, in its chief faction, anyway, the Party of the Democrats of the Left—this modernized or semi-modernized party (but which was it: modernized? or only semi-modernized? that was Rocca's question) whose national secretary sat at the front of the theater serenely declaring his cautious sympathy for the principle of democracy promotion and even proffering a few non-pacifist remarks on the possible role, under exceptional circumstances, of, yes, military action on behalf of ethical aims: a rhetoric wholly removed from the Marxist language of not so long ago. So Fassino spoke, and the audience listened intently, and the evolution of the classic left was unmistakably visible in the room, and there was a drama in that moment.

Still, everyone at the Cinema Capranichetta knew that ultimately the drama of the left and its modernization was a matter of flesh and blood and not just theories and party platforms, and the man who most vividly embodied that drama in Italy was the one who had been, until then, silent, seated at the side. Then Adriano Sofri began to speak. And the theater itself seemed to suck in its breath—the cameramen and reporters waving their gadgets, the faces craning forward in the rows of seats, mesmerized by the mere sight of Sofri bending over the microphone, this hero or villain or hero-villain (depending on your point of view) whose career and life story had perplexed the Italian public for decades, and who did have something to say.

Myself, I had no way to judge the particulars of Adriano Sofri and his tragedy—the precise accusations against him and his fate in the courts and the prisons. It is true that, over the years, a few aspects of the larger Sofri affair have wafted their way across the Atlantic, which has meant that Americans, too, or, at least, any of us with a curiosity about Italian events, have likewise had the opportunity to be thoroughly perplexed. The terrorist bomb at the Piazza Fontana in Milan in 1969, the random murder of 16 people (or, by some accounts, 17), the wounding of some 90 others—this was something that, at the time, people all over the world carefully noted, not just because the bombing was murderous but because it was mysterious: a terrorist act without an obvious purpose or even an obvious perpetrator. An outbreak of the inexplicable. A sinister harbinger.

And, all over the world, people watched the peculiar chain of arrests that followed—the police actions that ultimately led to the arrest and conviction of two neofascists, but then also to the neofascists' acquittal, and that meanwhile led, in the first days after the bomb, to the arrest of a couple of militants of the left. Anarchists, as it happened. One of the anarchists was Giuseppe Pinelli. He was taken to the police headquarters in Milan and fell from a window—more precisely, from the office window of the police superintendent, Luigi Calabresi—and he died on his way to the hospital.

That was an ominous event in the extreme, back in 1969—which, to anyone observing from the United States, had the peculiar quality of echoing a not entirely forgotten American event of many decades earlier, during the Sacco-Vanzetti affair, when an anarchist had likewise fallen (if that is the word) to his death from a window of the police headquarters in New York. Anarchists tumbling to their deaths from police windows—this cannot be an everyday occurrence. Nor did the Milan events of 1969 disappear entirely from public memory afterward, if only because Dario Fo wrote a witty and indignant play called *Accidental Death of an Anarchist* about the events, and the play hopscotched from one country to the next, until, via London, it landed on Broadway.

It was Giuseppe Pinelli's death that set off the larger affair—not at once, but slowly: a fuse that burned for three years. Nobody could have mistaken the meaning of what happened next, however—the altogether predictable yet entirely shocking assassination of Superintendent Calabresi in front of his own house in Milan, this terrible event which sent Italy plunging downward into one pistol attack and political murder after another, until the killings had mounted into the hundreds and even Aldo Moro,

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the Christian Democratic prime minister, had ended up kidnapped and murdered: these many dreadful events, the Years of Lead, that turned out to be grimmer and more frightening in Italy than anywhere else in Europe or North America, apart from a few counties in Northern Ireland and the Basque district of Spain. And who was responsible for that one terrible opening murder from long ago, the assassination in Milan of the police superintendent? The gunmen, and the gunmen's commanders, if they had commanders—who were those people?

The left-wing student and worker uprisings in Italy circa 1968 produced a flood of new organizations and mini-movements, massively popular in the university districts and in some of the giant factories—organizations and movements of the ultra-left that raged against bourgeois society but also against Italy's Communists and Socialists, the traditional Old Leftists who seemed, in the eyes of the radical young New Leftists, much too conservative, much too implicated in the workings of capitalism, much too reluctant to make the authentic social revolution that so many Italians had been earnestly awaiting ever since the fall of Mussolini. And, of those new and ultra-left-wing groups, the largest and most vigorous, at least in some of the university towns and a few other places, was Lotta Continua.

That was Sofri's organization. Lotta Continua came to be pretty well-known in other parts of the world—better known than any of the other new Italian groups of that particular era if only because, in the eyes of young leftists in other countries, Lotta Continua seemed the most in tune with the larger, international, insurrectionary spirit. Lotta Continua was frisky, utopian, impudent—a movement whose revolt against the creaky bureaucracies of the Old Left and against the whole of bourgeois life was as much cultural as political. Lotta Continua was, to be sure, an extra-parliamentary movement, which led it to promote the cultural revolution even without exercising power in any conventional sense—and this was precisely the aspect that aroused sympathetic vibrations among the new left-wing movements in other countries. Then again, some of those extra-parliamentary activities and attitudes in Italy, given the zealotry of the age, were bound to exert an intimidating pressure on the streets and in the universities. And the intimidations grew, and a hot atmosphere of spontaneous violence began to congeal into a colder cult of organized violence. In this fashion, too, Lotta Continua resembled a great many other movements of the radical left in Western countries, post-1968, grimmer with every passing month. And the slide toward guerrilla war got underway.

It has never been disputed that, after the death of the anarchist Pinelli, Lotta Continua launched a campaign of vilification against Superintendent Calabresi, and did so without displaying much of a sense of limits, either—such that, when Calabresi was at last murdered, Lotta Continua's newspaper, in the flush of hatred, openly condoned the act. That was a logical thing for the newspaper to do, given the campaign of vilification, but also a crazy thing to do, plainly suggesting that, by the early '70s and maybe even before, some of those frisky young militants on the radical left had gone out of their minds. Still, most people in Lotta Continua had not gone out of their minds. Some people actively argued against the drift toward guerrilla war, and some went further yet and soberly noted that, as time passed, the libertarian impulses of the super-militant movements circa 1968 had begun to curdle, and the rebellious anti-authoritarians of the student uprisings were degenerating into thugs, and there was no purpose in keeping up a political movement whose meaning had been lost.

In France, the most popular and prestigious organization to emerge from the 1968 student uprising was the Gauche Prolétarienne, in which Glucksmann had played a role. The leaders of the Gauche Prolétarienne made just such an observation about their own political foolishness and their moral descent. And—precisely at the moment when their activities had begun to tilt into guerrilla violence—they took the unusual and lucid step of disbanding their own organization. In Italy, Lotta Continua dallied a little longer. But, in the end, Lotta Continua likewise decided to disband. In France, the Gauche Prolétarienne's daily newspaper, *Libération*, went on publishing and even flourished, though in a version that was leftist without being revolutionary. In Italy, the newspaper *Lotta Continua* likewise went on publishing. Then even the newspaper folded. The era of delirious left-wing utopias was definitively at an end. And among the more thoughtful militants from Lotta Continua who took the crucial decision to step back from the abyss was surely—his own comrades, any number of them, insisted on this and have done so for decades—Adriano Sofri.

And yet, in 1988—16 years after the police superintendent's assassination—Sofri was arrested and charged with having ordered the attack, and, two years later, he and a couple of other militants from the organization were convicted and sen-

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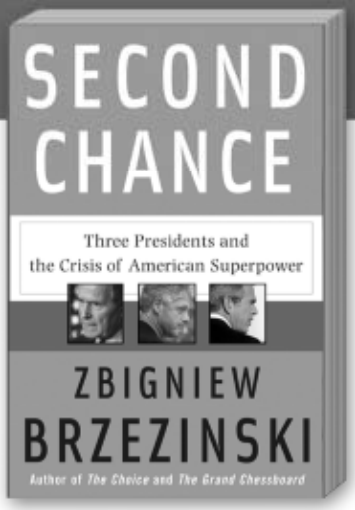
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tenced to 22 years. Theirs was a very peculiar trial, though, and its oddities were apparent from the start. The only person actually to admit having participated in the police superintendent's murder was a fourth man—who, by accusing the other three, managed to win the favor of the authorities and ended up serving no time at all, at least not for this particular crime: an absurdity that, no matter how it was explained, subverted the dignity of the trial.

The historian Carlo Ginzburg wrote a book about Sofri's trial and its aftermath, *The Judge and the Historian*, which Einaudi brought out in 1991 and which Ginzburg updated in English in 1999, and it was from Ginzburg that I gathered most of my own knowledge of the juridical history—the original trial and conviction of Sofri and the others; the confirmation of the verdict in 1991; the acquittal of the defendants in 1993; the judicial rejection of the acquittal in 1994; the renewed conviction in 1995; the upholding of the verdict in 1997; the Milan Court of Appeal's rejection of the request for a new trial; the annulment by the Supreme Court of the Milan court's rejection; the Brescia Court of Appeal's rejection yet again of the request for a new trial; and so forth, even beyond Ginzburg's update: "a legal case against precedent in Italy—and, perhaps, outside Italy," in Ginzburg's very believable estimation.

Sofri always insisted on his innocence, and he did so with a bravura disdain for his own personal fate. Opportunities to escape came and went, but escape did not interest him. Nor did he request a pardon—though many people figured that, if only he had done so, the authorities might have seized on the opportunity to rescue their own prestige and that of the Italian judicial system and would have gladly rid themselves of their own embarrassment. Captain Dreyfus was offered a pardon for exactly this reason, and Dreyfus sensibly accepted, even if his supporters would have preferred that he had gone on martyring himself. One of Sofri's co-defendants, Ovidio Bompressi, did request a pardon, and he received it, too—received his pardon one day before the panel discussion at the Cinema Capranichetta in 2006, an early result of the left-wing victory at the polls. But Adriano Sofri made no request.

Carlo Ginzburg in his history of the trials described Sofri as one of his closest friends—which I took as further testimony in Sofri's favor, a sign of Sofri's upstanding character, but which might also be regarded as an honest admission of personal bias on the historian's part. What to make of this affair, then? I have conducted a small poll of my Italian friends and colleagues on the topic of Sofri's experiences—the journalists and intellectuals whom I know on the radical left, and the not-so-radical left, and in the world of the Catholic activists, and on the political right; intelligent people who, like everyone with a taste for newspapers, have followed the case and who, in one instance, even recalled Sofri from his days as a revolutionary militant at the University of Pisa, long ago.

These people, my Italian friends, have communicated to me a cacophony of opinion: a caustic judgment that Sofri had received his fair share of trials and retrials, and more than his fair share; a rueful conclusion that possibly Sofri might, in fact, be guilty, judged on the insider basis of left-wing rumors, though it was counter-intuitive for anyone on the left to say so; a cautious judgment that Sofri might conceivably have been guilty but, even so, had never received a fair trial, which made it impossible to say for sure; a perplexed acknowledgment that here was a Chinese puzzle that no sane person would ever be able to solve.

A MYSTERY, THEN. Still, if Sofri's appearance at the Cinema Capranichetta in 2006 excited so much fascinated attention from the audience in the rows of seats and the politicians and journalists, it was not because of any lingering curiosity about a long-ago crime that was obviously never going to be solved to universal satisfaction. From a historical point of view, the legal question of Sofri's guilt or innocence hardly even mattered anymore, given that, whether or not he personally had crossed the moral line in the case of Superintendent Calabresi, he and a great number of people on the revolutionary left had surely come pretty close to doing so or, at minimum, had contributed their bit to making the ultra-leftist atmosphere what it was, back in 1972 at the time of the murder. This, at least, was not in controversy.

The excitement that Sofri aroused bore on a different matter, a deeper mystery, not from the '70s but from later years—from the period after his courtroom saga had already gotten underway. For what was it, exactly, that managed to produce such a thorough transformation of the Italian left during the '90s—this historic change of attitude that, in the end, allowed the mainstream of the Italian left to come out in support not just of NATO in the abstract (which was relatively easy for left-wing politicians to do) but NATO in the concrete, a NATO that might actually put its military capacity to practical use? The change of attitude that motivated so many people on the Italian left to endorse the intervention in the Balkans, the change that Piero Fassino so cautiously expressed in his remarks at the cinema and refused to repudiate even if George W. Bush was currently trampling on every principle known to man—what brought about this monumental turn? The faraway collapse of the Soviet Union might be mentioned. Nearer at hand, the French intellectuals with backgrounds in the revolutionary left—Glucksmann, his comrade Bernard Kouchner, other people—had an influence, directly or indirectly.

But nobody seriously doubts that, in Italy itself, in the zones of public opinion that constitute the enormous Italian left, Sofri's political evolution counted for rather a lot. In the 1990s, Sofri was a prisoner, yes, either in jail or biding his time between trials. Lotta Continua was merely a memory. Even so, this no-longer-existing organization somehow retained a trace of its old luster, at least in the eyes of people who, for one reason or another, looked back on the New Left and the student insurgencies with fondness or respect. It could almost have been imagined that, even after many years, Lotta Continua remained a shadow organization, and he was still the leader, and his followers, still his followers—though some of those ex-militants were steadily advancing in their middle-class careers, and Sofri himself was plummeting downward into the zones of prison and official condemnation.

Politicians of the left visited him in prison, and, to the amazement and disgust of the right-wing politicians, the left-wing politicians listened to him with a visible demeanor of respect, as if paying him court—as if he were, in fact, still the leader. Anyway, he continued to act like a leader. Surely that was why he launched his campaign on behalf of the Bosnians and the city of Sarajevo—his solidarity campaign for the people who had come under attack from the crazed Serbian nationalism of Slobodan Milošević. Surely that was why, in those moments between jail terms when he could perfectly well have fled to France or Argentina, Sofri established himself, instead, in besieged Sarajevo, under the public eye, and faithfully filed his journalist's reports—his articles for *La Repubblica*, dateline Sarajevo, written by a man who evidently preferred to regard himself not as a prisoner on parole, nor as a victim of persecution, but as a champion of the oppressed. A man with leadership responsibilities—obliged, therefore, to run the risks of sniper attacks and Serbian bombardments. Nor did he abandon this campaign once he was back in jail in Pisa—his appeals rejected, his conviction reconfirmed.

I can imagine the consternation those *Repubblica* columns of his must have

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caused among his left-wing readers—a consternation not because the man behind the byline had been convicted of a terrible crime but because his political analyses no longer conformed to the dogmas of the past. *La Repubblica* is the big left-wing paper in Italy, and its readers, a good many of them, were accustomed to paying proper attention to Adriano Sofri. But the Sofri they used to know had never spoken like this before. Solidarity with Sarajevo—that was easy to say. Solidarity with people getting murdered en masse simply because they belonged to the wrong mini-ethnic group. Solidarity had a meaning, though. NATO did come into play, after a while. The U.S. warplanes took off from the Aviano airbase on their deadly missions to the Balkans—these U.S. planes that every last person on the left all over the world had regarded with utter loathing during the period of the Vietnam war. In Italy, the antiwar activists descended on Aviano to register their indignation. This was precisely what Sofri might have done, in the past—gone to lead an antiwar demonstration.

Only, this time, he was not the pacifists' comrade. The whole constellation of international politics and even military affairs had begun to assume a different shape, in his eyes. And how astonishing was Sofri's popular success as a journalist, during those terrible years of his own courtroom and jailhouse struggles! He composed his columns, and *La Repubblica* ran them on the front page, no less, and the readers did seem to stay with him—at least in sufficient numbers to keep the editors happy. Editors with sagas of their own, by the way. (Not to mention the extraordinary fact that one of those *Repubblica* editors was none other than Superintendent Calabresi's son.) And how astonishing that, with his place secure at the left-wing daily, Sofri chose to write for Ferrara's *Foglio*, as well—where, to be sure, he was hardly alone among the veterans of Lotta Continua—composing still more columns for a competing journal of the right, as if in daily impudent demonstration that, in our modern age, a liberated left ought to define itself by something other than eternal hostility to the conservative right, and a proper left ought to be able to draw a firm distinction between the Berlusconis of this world and the Miloševićs of this world and, as the Euston Manifesto urged, ought no longer to regard the right-left division as the eternal key to human wisdom.

At the Cinema Capranichetta, Sofri proffered a few comments on the British manifesto. His remarks were friendly, yet not enthusiastic. The Euston Manifesto was too short, he complained—and this was undeniable, given how complex the political issues are. And the manifesto was too long—and this, too, was undeniable, given that a proper manifesto ought to reduce complicated matters to easy formulas. Especially a manifesto whose authors boasted of having written it in a pub, which was one of the Euston Manifesto's claims to fame. Nor did Sofri seem entirely happy with every last remark made by his fellow panelists. He honored his *Foglio* colleague Christian Rocca as a man of the left, even if the hardline dogmatists were keen on vituperating Rocca as a notorious neocon. But Sofri reacted skeptically to Rocca's marvelous subtitle *The Left and the Last 45 Dictators* by wondering if all 45 of the dictatorships needed to be overthrown by force of arms. And would that include China?

He threw a skeptical remark in my own direction—regarding the filiation that I have pointed out between the fascism and totalitarianism of the European past and the Islamist fanaticism of our own time. Sofri wondered if that sort of analysis didn't blur the new quality, the novelty, of our current era. A legitimate question! Here was a man with opinions. He did not make his way from jail to the Cinema Capranichetta in order to toss flowers and flattery in every direction. His own position on the invasion of Iraq was entirely critical. He argued that military intervention could be justified only by a state of extreme and acute humanitarian emergency—by the kind of danger that had been faced by the Kosovars, or by the Tutsis of Rwanda at the moment when the Hutus had launched their assault. A military intervention into Iraq might have been justified on humanitarian grounds at some other moments in modern times, in his opinion. But not in 2003.

His general outlook resembled Fassino's, except that Sofri's ardor for promoting democratic ideas and practices in other parts of the world seemed a little more exuberant than Fassino's. (Of course—wasn't this the whole point of Lotta Continua, back in the old days? To be more radical than the Communists!) He recalled a much-reported political demonstration that had taken place in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, some years ago. A group of Saudi women had protested the grotesqueries of their situation by ostentatiously driving their own cars—a forbidden act in the land of patriarchal ultra-piety. And Sofri reflected that, as a gesture of support, the mayor of Rome ought to have responded by organizing a vehicular solidarity demonstration in the center of Rome, with cars roaming around and honking their horns. A mass car-honk would have made the TV news and might have been broadcast around the world—the car drivers of Rome producing an infernal racket in open support of the oppressed and valiant women of Riyadh. That was a clever idea, I thought. Probably even a useful idea—the kind of proposal that has all along been missing in the Western countries in regard to the unsung struggles for rights and freedom in non-democracies of the Muslim world. A high-spirited sign of democratic internationalism, not to mention a refusal to abandon the principle of women's rights—even if, among liberal intellectuals in our present moment, the latest fashion is to turn away from Muslim feminists out of deference to the Islamist right wing.

But the striking aspect about Sofri's presentation at the cinema was his insistence on identifying with his own past—not that anyone who had just suggested a theatrical women's-rights mass horn-honk in the center of Rome needed to reaffirm his membership in the generation of 1968. He reflected on his ancient friendship with Danny Cohn-Bendit, the principal leader of the student uprising in Paris in 1968, and with Adam Michnik, the principal leader of the student uprising in Warsaw in that same year—a three-way friendship that had somehow lasted into the present. He observed that, in the '90s, all three friends had actively endorsed the Balkan interventions. But only Michnik had supported the intervention in Iraq in 2003. And why had Michnik done this? Sofri confined himself to remarking that Michnik was Polish—as if everybody at the movie theater would understand that, for a man like Michnik, with a background in the totalitarian experience of the Eastern Bloc, the argument for invading Saddam Hussein's Iraq might have seemed a little stronger than for Western Europeans like Cohn-Bendit and himself. He observed that, among politically minded people, disagreements about war tend to get heated, and friendships dissolve. But his own three-way friendship had not dissolved. And why was that? He did not explain.

But here, at last, buried within his nostalgia about friendships from 1968, was the deepest reason of all why Sofri's appearance at the cinema had aroused agitated emotions in the crowd. He invoked Cohn-Bendit and Michnik for natural and obvious reasons, given that everyone was discussing the anti-totalitarian left, and these were two of its main leaders, and Rocca had written about them, and so had I, and Sofri wanted to address his fellow panelists and their concerns. But mostly, I think, he invoked Cohn-Bendit and Michnik in order to make a

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point about his own supremely dramatic history. He wanted to affirm his left-wing past. He wanted to make clear that, in coming out for the NATO intervention in the Balkans back in the 1990s and even in choosing to contribute to a free-thinking journal of the right like *Il Foglio*, he had stayed faithful to the deepest values of a left-wing soul.

He invoked his friendships from 1968 in order to affirm that certain of his positions had changed, but not his colors. He was the same man as in his youth—only more lucid. And he insisted on his admiration and affection for Michnik in order to specify that, even in the disputed case of Iraq, serious people might reasonably disagree, including the most serious people of all—the left-wingers who bore the marks of prison, not that he said one word about his own sufferings, or about the years that Michnik had spent in the prisons of Poland under the Communists. If Sofri could not grant to a man like Michnik the respectful right to argue about Iraq, then nothing in his own political evolution made sense. And so, he granted Michnik the right. Reluctantly. Willingly. And in the rows of seats at the Cinema Capranichetta, faces leaned forward to study him ever more intently—puzzled at Sofri's very peculiar personal fate and at his intellectual evolution. Or maybe people leaned forward out of a feeling that touched on awe. Out of a recognition that, justly or unjustly, the man at the microphone was expiating the crimes of the left from long ago, and, even so, this man with his calm expression and shaky health had remained alive and responsive to the modern moment.

Maybe there was a recognition that something in Sofri's vast and baffling political trajectory made perfect sense, after all—even if a good many people in the rows of seats might have found it hard to specify exactly why this should be so, or might have been hard pressed to identify each and every step that Sofri had taken from the revolutionary left of long ago to the kind of impassioned liberalism, if I may use the word, that he had later on adopted. Or maybe some of those people at the cinema, the journalists with their tiny tape recorders, had trod a similar path, and they peered at him as if into a mirror, filled with half-formed thoughts.

My own reaction to Sofri's talk was, I must say, not at all puzzled—at least, not on the question of his political evolution. He offered his several comments, and, as he rambled on, I began to think that, for all my demurral from this point or that, his remarks, taken as a whole, expressed and even confirmed something of my own idea about modern history and the left. Six years ago, I wrote a long essay for this magazine called "The Passion of Joschka Fischer" (September 3, 2001), about the ideological journey of the radical left in Germany, from its revolutionary and sometimes violent dogmatism circa 1968 to a new kind of left-liberalism and even to the embrace of liberal interventionist ideas in the '90s. My essay on Germany focused on Joschka Fischer, a housemate of Cohn-Bendit's whose personal story was the inverse of Adriano Sofri's—the story of a man who, having gotten started in left-wing politics with ideas roughly similar to Sofri's, was able to rise in German politics, instead of plunging into prison, and ended up serving as foreign minister of his country. And yet, ideologically speaking, Fischer's story and Sofri's were pretty much the same, which is amazing to consider.

Still, listening to Sofri speak at the Cinema Capranichetta made me realize that on one point I had been wrong, and my interpretation required a revision. After the Iraq war had gotten underway, I added a few more chapters to my essay on Joschka Fischer, which I turned into a book called *Power and the Idealists*—a book that, having begun with Fischer and Germany, went on to devote a lot of attention to Bernard Kouchner and the rather similar evolution of the revolutionary left in France. It was Kouchner who, once he had given up on Communism and his love for Ché Guevara, went on to found the modern idea of liberal intervention. I carried the story into Iraq and the arguments for and against the war among the old '68ers—Kouchner, Cohn-Bendit, Michnik. And I concluded that, given the catastrophes in Iraq, the story of the left-wing evolution from the '60s had come to an end, and no one was going to deliver any more speeches about the holy left-wing mission of the generation of 1968, the way that Kouchner used to do. This made a pretty dismal ending to my book, but what else could anyone have expected, given the situation in Iraq?

But then I found myself sitting next to Sofri and listening to him orate at the Cinema Capranichetta in 2006 about his continuing friendship with Cohn-Bendit and Michnik, and I realized that, on the contrary, Adriano Sofri had just delivered such a speech, and he did think that the principles and ideals from long ago were still worth talking about, even if some people who upheld those principles had supported the invasion of Iraq and he and other people had remained opposed. So I was wrong. Then again, it occurs to me that some other commentators, in trying to make their own historical judgments about recent trends, have likewise turned out to be wrong, chiefly on the broader principles of democracy-promotion and liberal intervention, the themes of Rocca's book. Lately, it has become fashionable to declare those principles dead and buried, on the confident assumption that disaster in Iraq has cancelled out every other conceivable lesson that might have been learned over the years and no one will be able to speak any longer in the way that people used to speak about the possibility of large-scale actions to make the world a safer place and the hour of foreign policy "realism" is upon us. And yet, considered as a current of thought on the liberal left, the notions of intervention and democratic solidarity have not, in fact, subsided into extinction, and the intellectual battles do go on, and an international tendency of thought does seem to exist—in Italy, France, and Britain, to mention only the countries I have been discussing.

And as a political influence? In Italy, the left-wing coalition has drifted over the last year ever more in a realist or even a passive direction in regard to the democratic foreign policy causes of the past; yet even in the left-wing coalition a few Italian signatories of Britain's Euston Manifesto have clung to their positions (one of them, a young senator, is undersecretary for foreign affairs), which does seem remarkable, under the circumstances. Gordon Brown remains, for the moment, a mystery—though no one seems to imagine that his government is going to make a radical break with its own legacy from Blair. But no one can doubt that France has just now begun a tremendous turnabout on these several matters. The people around *Le Meilleur des Mondes* have turned out to be a lot more influential than anyone would have imagined a year ago. The elevation of Kouchner to the French foreign ministry could hardly be a more dramatic development—quite as if the neo-left or the Euston Manifesto's "new political alignment" has turned out to be a movement with a tremendous future. No, the story has not ended—not the story of the anti-totalitarian left and its liberal evolution, nor the story of the generation of 1968 and its most prominent leaders, nor the story of the modern notions of democracy-promotion and liberal intervention. No, even now—even in our present age of defeat and discouragement—the struggle does continue. ◆

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Army of One

The overhyping of David Petraeus.

ANDREW J. BACEVICH

When announced earlier this year, President Bush's selection of General David Petraeus as senior U.S. commander in Iraq met with something like universal acclaim. Not since 1862, when Abraham Lincoln restored George B. McClellan to command of the Army of the Potomac after Second Bull Run, had the appointment of a senior officer been received with such enthusiasm or created such high expectations. Gushing media reports compared Petraeus to T.E. Lawrence and the biblical King David. The Senate confirmed his promotion and appointment without a dissenting vote. After a long series of frustrating missteps and failures, here, it seemed, was the general who would put things right.

The encomiums thrown his way derived from the belief that, in Petraeus, Bush had, at long last, found a general who grasped the actual nature of the Iraq war. (Bush certainly believes so: According to a recent article in *The Washington Post*, the president has mentioned Petraeus "at least 150 times this year in speeches, interviews, and news conferences.") As commander of the Army's 101st Airborne Division, Petraeus stabilized parts of northern Iraq in the vicinity of Mosul and established a functioning government in that city, while L. Paul Bremer and the CPA floundered in Baghdad. Drawing on his own experiences and on insights from the study of history—his Ph.D. dissertation at Princeton had assessed the lessons of Vietnam—Petraeus had led the way in helping the Army rediscover counterinsurgency doctrine. He had served, in effect, as the author-in-chief of "Field Manual 3-24," the Army's recently published and largely well-received counterinsurgency handbook.

In a cover story featuring Petraeus back in July 2004, *Newsweek* asked: "CAN THIS MAN SAVE IRAQ?" Eighteen months later, the White House, Congress, and the Pentagon had arrived at a consensus: If any hope of saving Iraq remained, David Petraeus was the man to turn that hope into reality.

Yet Iraq has not been kind to the reputation of senior U.S. commanders. For a brief moment in the early '90s, for example, H. Norman Schwarzkopf seemed a likely candidate to join the ranks of history's Great Captains. No more: Schwarzkopf's failure to finish off an adversary of remarkable ineptitude left Saddam Hussein in power, his Republican Guard largely intact, and Iraqi Kurds and Shia under Saddam's boot. One result was a large, permanent, and problematic U.S. military presence to keep Saddam in his "box." Once seen as a stupendous victory, Operation Desert Storm deserves to be enshrined as a giant step down the nation's road to Persian Gulf perdition.

In 2003, General Tommy Franks set out to clean up Stormin' Norman's mess. Although Franks has modestly described the ensuing invasion of Iraq as "unequaled in its excellence by anything in the annals of war," future generations are unlikely to sustain that judgment. When it came to leaving a tangle of loose ends, Franks made Schwarzkopf look like a piker. His niche in history will always be alongside Bremer and George Tenet, fellow recipients of the Medal of Freedom—the Three Stooges who labored mightily to convert a small, unnecessary war into an epic debacle.

After Franks came the team of John Abizaid and Ricardo Sanchez (and, later, George Casey). These earnest and no doubt well-meaning men inherited a difficult situation and gave it their all, expending lives and money with abandon. Despite much huffing and puffing about "progress" and "turning points," they achieved negligible results: Iraq slowly descended toward chaos.

Petraeus is now engaged in an effort to slow and reverse that descent. Although the deluded and disingenuous may persist in pretending otherwise, his mission is not to "win" the Iraq war. Coalition forces in Iraq are not fighting to achieve victory. Their purpose is far more modest. According to Petraeus himself, U.S. troops and their allies are "buying time for Iraqis to reconcile." President Bush and Secretary of Defense Robert Gates have explicitly endorsed this new strategy, but history will remember Petraeus as its principal architect. To avoid the fate of his hapless predecessors, Petraeus must show that his strategy of buying-time-to-reconcile can produce tangible results. Yet an exploration of what the buying-time strategy actually means reveals that the prospects of its success are exceedingly slim. The cult of Petraeus exists not because the general has figured out the war but because hiding behind the general allows the Bush administration to postpone the day when it must reckon with the consequences of its abject failure in Iraq.

The most fundamental question that should be asked about the strategy is: Exactly how much time does Petraeus need to buy? The answer: a lot. With his frequent references to "the Washington clock" and "the Baghdad clock," Petraeus himself has recognized that "buying time" is by no means a simple proposition. The problem with the two clocks—one driven by domestic politics and the other connected to events in Iraq itself—is that they are wildly out of synch. As Petraeus himself has acknowledged, "The Washington clock is ticking faster than the Baghdad clock." Indeed, the steady erosion of popular and congressional support for the war, lately even among Republicans, suggests that time on the Washington clock has all but expired.

To correct this situation, Petraeus speaks of "trying to speed up the Baghdad clock a bit to produce some progress on the ground that can, perhaps … put a little more time on the Washington clock." Yet Petraeus himself must recognize that this

Ashley Gilbertson

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qualifies at best as a long shot. He knows that any counterinsurgency is by definition a protracted project. Success requires not weeks or months of exertions but years. As he told the BBC in a recent interview, "The average counterinsurgency is somewhere around a nine- or a ten-year endeavor." For his strategy to succeed, putting "a little more time" on the Washington clock won't come close to doing the trick. Indeed, unless the Petraeus strategy gains the firm and enthusiastic support of President Bush's successor, it doesn't stand a chance of working. Yet, unless John McCain's campaign pulls off a remarkable turnaround—an unlikely event—the president who takes office in January 2009 won't have campaigned on a strategy of "buying time" to prolong the Iraq war.

Furthermore, Washington's typically narcissistic preoccupation with the political clock has diverted attention from the fact that the U.S. military's Baghdad clock is also quickly running down. Apart from the doughty warriors at the American Enterprise Institute, most informed observers understand that, with the ongoing surge, America's land forces have shot their wad. The current commitment of 160,000 troops to Iraq is unsustainable beyond early next year, absent draconian measures like extending yet again the combat tours of soldiers who have already seen their deployments go from twelve to 15 months in duration. If the wizards who concocted President Bush's Long War had decided back in 2002 or 2003 to increase the Army's size, options for maintaining a large force in Iraq might exist. But Petraeus will find little consolation in such might-have-beens. "Buying time" in Baghdad requires the ability to sustain a very robust U.S. troop presence for years to come, and that's simply not in the cards.

Then there is the question of whether the actions of coalition forces, now engaged in the so-called "surge," are actually conducive to putting time back on the clock. Right now, it appears the opposite is true: Instead of putting more time on the Washington clock, the surge is actually causing it to run down more quickly. Observers may argue about whether or not the surge is achieving Petraeus's "progress on the ground," selectively citing whatever arcane (and frequently dubious) statistics happen to support their preconceived view. But such arguments are beside the point. Politically speaking, only one statistic matters: the number of Americans being killed. Since the surge began, that number has risen sharply: Over 100 U.S. troops died in April, May, and again in June—the first time since the war began that American deaths reached triple digits for three consecutive months. July is on its way to being a comparably bloody month. From his comfortable command post at the American Enterprise Institute, Frederick Kagan may find "every reason to believe" that operations devised by Petraeus will eventually "reduce the level of violence in Baghdad." In the meantime, however, the toll suffered by U.S. troops grows ever greater. That trend, if it continues, will itself doom Petraeus's hopes of buying more time.

Even in the short run, moreover, it's difficult to see how the Petraeus strategy will promote the much hoped for, but never explicitly defined, "reconciliation" among Iraqi sects, tribes, and ethnic groups. Indeed, at least one recent component of that strategy—U.S. forces collaborating with Sunni militants who have turned against Al Qaeda—seems likely to make any eventual reconciliation even more improbable. However useful these partnerships may be tactically, U.S. assistance to the Islamic Army and 1920 Revolution Brigade necessarily strengthens and legitimizes such groups. Whether intended or not, one result is to undermine the claims of Iraqi authorities in Baghdad to represent the nation's sole, rightful government.

It's the equivalent of the police arming the Crips to take on the Bloods. Here and there, gang violence might briefly subside, but the rule of law is unlikely to benefit. And, sooner or later, the Crips will turn their guns on the cops. Making common cause with Sunni insurgents will reduce further the already iffy prospects for progress on the political front. As such, the policy actually increases the overall amount of time that Petraeus needs to buy.

Along with any number of other American generals, Petraeus has stated categorically that there is "no military solution" to Iraq. The best the United States can do, he says, is to "provide a window of opportunity and time and space that will allow Iraqi leaders to resolve" their own problems. Setting aside the very large question of whether rival Iraqi leaders are actually interested in resolving their differences (or have the capacity to do so), the buy-time-to-reconcile strategy assumes that American power adroitly employed can somehow prop open that window of opportunity. In this narrower sense, Petraeus still clings to the hope of engineering a de facto military solution. His approach takes it as a given that properly configured U.S. forces guided by sound counterinsurgency doctrine will nurture the conditions from which an Iraqi-engineered political settlement will emerge.

Had the United States taken this approach back in the weeks and months immediately following the fall of Baghdad, it might have borne fruit. But 2007 is not 2003. Given the passage of time—and given the innumerable blunders perpetrated by generals and civilian policymakers alike during those years—U.S. forces have become part of the problem rather than part of any prospective solution.

Petraeus, who cultivates the image of a sage warrior-intellectual, knows this. Among his favorite axioms is this: "Any army of liberation has a certain half-life before it becomes an army of occupation." Petraeus made this comment repeatedly to reporters in 2003 and 2004. He reiterated the point in a 2006 article summarizing his own lessons from Iraq. The point is not without wisdom. It also possesses immediate relevance to matters at hand. Somewhat coyly, Petraeus has never specified the duration of this half-life. Yet this much is certain: The moment when Americans might have persuaded Iraqis to embrace them as liberators has long since passed. We have failed to make good on too many promises. In our heavy-handed efforts to root out insurgents, we have too frequently mistaken the innocent for the guilty. However inadvertently, we have killed and maimed too many civilians. Sadly, in places like Abu Ghraib and Haditha, we have committed too many crimes. We have just plain screwed up too many times.

As a consequence, we have squandered too much time—over four years. Not even the most enlightened generalship combined with all the good will in the world can restore that time. Last year, Petraeus observed that any conquering army, once having swept aside the old order, faces a "race against the clock to achieve as quickly as possible the expectations of those liberated." Well into the fifth year of the Iraq war, the United States has lost that race.

In June, Petraeus issued to all members of his command his personal "Counterinsurgency Guidance"—ten key points to guide their actions. In point nine in this decalogue, the commander charges his troops to "Be first with the truth." The guidance is something that Petraeus himself should take to heart. For the truth is that the time to implement the strategy that he has devised does not exist. ◆

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An Iraq Album PHOTOGRAPHS AND TEXT BY ASHLEY GILBERTSON

Gilbertson, a freelance photographer for The New York Times, has been traveling to Iraq since 2002. A compilation of his war photography will be published as Whiskey Tango Foxtrot: A Photographer's Chronicle of the Iraq War in October.

Blood and Fire

An Iraqi tried to extinguish a burning van on Baghdad's Sadoun Street. The incident appeared to be unrelated to the war, though I still took cover when I heard ammunition going off from within the inferno. Left: Abdullah Ismail Khalif, a civilian who sat out the 2004 offensive in Fallujah, pleaded to Marines for help after he and his family were shot by an American machine gunner. After hearing Khalif's pleas, Iraqi troops said, "Just shoot him." Below: Sahar Mohammed Abdullah, 23, is treated by Marines in Fallujah. She was shot when her car was raked by U.S. machine-gun fire. Her mother was killed, and the Marines didn't have the heart to break the news to her.

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The Body Politic
This corpse lay in a clearing among trash and debris for nine days. Sunni insurgents had left IEDs around it; as a result, attempts to pick it up had ended in the deaths of two Iraqi soldiers and the disabling of a tank. LEFT: *An Iraqi found by Americans in his home was added to the new biometric database used by the military. The system, which takes fingerprints and retina scans, both freaked out and infuriated Iraqis in the Baghdad neighborhood of Ghazaliya.*

The Children's War
Children who survived two weeks of intense fighting between the Mahdi Army and the 1st Armored Division in Karbala. LEFT: *Exhausted Marines rest inside a mosque in downtown Fallujah during the 2004 offensive.*

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The Suicide Train

Ramadi was so violent in 2004 that Marines were almost nonchalant about coming under attack. From an observation post, one of them told me to watch a U.S. convoy, nicknamed "the suicide train," as it rolled through the city and hit the inevitable roadside bomb. RIGHT: An insurgent captured by Marines in Fallujah.

Battle Fatigue

Suaada Saadoun, a Sunni widow, appealed to Kurdish and U.S. troops to intervene when Shia militiamen attempted to evict her and her family from their home. ABOVE, TOP: The men were arrested, but the next morning she was assassinated on her way home from market. After her funeral, her family moved out of the house. It was one of the most heartbreaking moments I'd witnessed in five years in Iraq. ABOVE, RIGHT: Sergeant Brud J. Cronkrite, 22, died just a few hours after he was evacuated from fighting in Karbala. RIGHT: A medic, whose tour had been extended from twelve to 15 months, lay exhausted after treating soldiers on the battlefield in intense summer heat.

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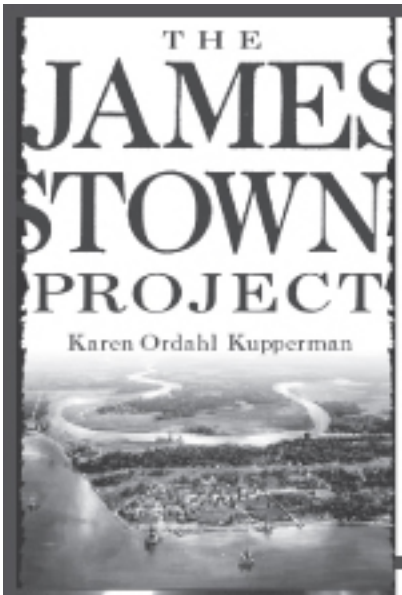

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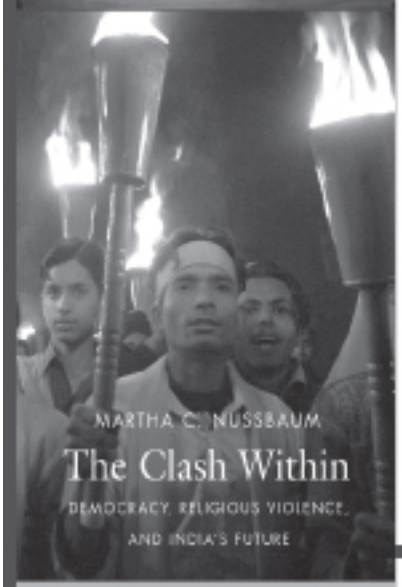

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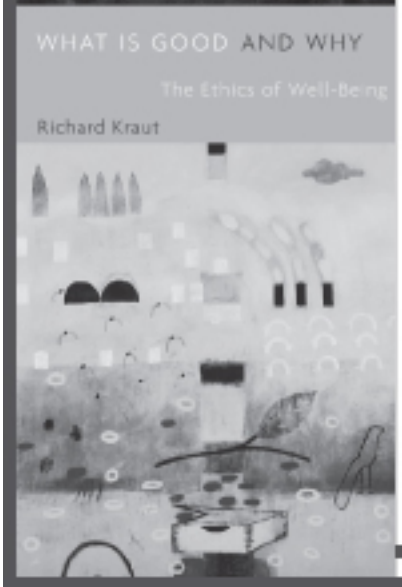

WHAT IS GOOD AND WHY

THE ETHICS OF WELL-BEING

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Stanley Kauffmann on Films

MOLIÈRE AND MORTALS

Nearly ten years ago, when *Shakespeare in Love* came along, I felt that the more the viewer knew about Will's life, the more enjoyable the picture would be. The screenwriters, Marc Norman and Tom Stoppard, of course knew that the hero of their passionate escapade was in fact a married man with a family back home—and the viewer who also knew it could, like the authors, get an extra charge of chuckle and spree.

Now from France comes *Molière*, written by Grégoire Vigneron and the director Laurent Tirard, in which the *Shakespeare* thought applies again. The uninformed viewer can certainly enjoy this picture, but a little knowledge of the major plays increases the fun. Tirard and Vigneron take a short, obscure period in their author-hero's life and fantasticate about it. To know a bit about Molière makes this pleasant film even pleasanter.

The story begins in 1658, when Molière and his theater company return to Paris. This company, the Illustrious Theater, has just completed a thirteen-year tour of France, which the members have used to burnish their abilities and which Molière, their leading actor, has used to burnish his playwriting craft as well. Still, successful though he is with comedy, Molière wants to write and play tragedy. The company tries to dissuade him.

After the dissent, the film flashes back thirteen years, to before the troupe left Paris. A young man named Jean-Baptiste Poquelin has helped to found an acting company that, with a finger-snap at modesty, calls itself the Illustrious Theater. It is 1645, and the leader of this theater is Poquelin, who now calls himself Molière. This troupe, which mostly does comedy, is in debt, partly because of Molière's ambitions to write and play tragedy. Suddenly he is thrown into debtors' prison. Mysteriously—this is where the screenplay's invention kicks in—his debts are paid and he is released. He doesn't know who did it or why. And now follow the several blank months in Molière's chronicle, which Tirard and Vigneron proceed to fill.

ANTHONY RUSSO

A certain Monsieur Jourdain, very rich, had sent an aide to scout Molière's acting. The aide admired what he saw, so Jourdain paid Molière's debts and now invites the actor to stay at his grand estate, to teach Jourdain speech and projection. With this new manner, the bourgeois Jourdain hopes to impress a marquise whom he is mad about. The actor, constrained by circumstances, accepts the offer. The fact that Jourdain has a wife on the premises doesn't bother either of the men. Jourdain just asks Molière to wear priest's garb so that his wife will think the actor is a tutor for their children.

The moment we hear the rich man's name and intent, we have a considerable clue about the film's design. A Monsieur Jourdain, rich and with social ambitions, is the center of *The Bourgeois Gentleman*, which Molière wrote twenty-five years later. Apparently, the film's plan is to turn these generally unknown months into a seedbed of material for future plays. For another instance, Jourdain's wife encounters Molière in the gardens and asks his name. Out of some subconscious wellspring he replies, "Monsieur Tartuffe"—a mock-priest who will wait decades for birth.

Moments from *Tartuffe* occur in "real life," however, as the film proceeds. Names of other Molière characters and touches of his plots also appear, giving us a nice aesthetic tease between fiction and fact. One element of the film, though, is all its own, at least as it is colored here—Molière's affair with Madame Jourdain—but even this affair has a later effect on the plays. All through the film Molière encounters or foresees comic material for future works. It's a clever idea, amusingly dramatized, and all the better because the film doesn't—can't—jettison Molière's obsession. He still loves tragedy, thinks it paramount, wants to write and perform it.

MOLIÈRE
Sony Pictures Classics

MY BEST FRIEND
IFC Films

NAMING NUMBER TWO
Cyan Pictures

Tirard as director is clearly happy with his material and makes us so. Gorgeousness for the eye is easy in this story, and we get lots of it. One aspect is particularly right: the casting. To act well in classic comedy, which is what this film tries to mirror, is to move forward, constantly and smoothly, without often pausing to investigate situations but simply encountering them. Elegant extroversion is needed in the acting. Romain Duris as Molière and especially Fabrice Luchini as Jourdain supply it, in full measure with full color. Duris, probably not incidentally, looks like one contemporary description of Molière: "Neither too fat nor too thin; he was more tall than short, and he had a noble bearing and a handsome leg.… The various movements of his [heavy black brows] made his expression very comical.… Nature … had refused him those external gifts so necessary … for tragic roles."

A grateful bow, too, to the enchanting Laura Morante as Madame Jourdain.

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A modern French comedy called *My Best Friend* is hardly classic, but in one way it comes closer to the classic than it may think. The screenplay, adapted by Jérôme Tonnerre and the director Patrice Leconte from a story by Olivier Dazat, reminds one of some basic French gag farces of the past. A giant mechanism is set up, then tyrannically dominates. The characters don't live credible lives—they go through the machine and come out the other side altered in some way. Sample: a Parisian man has several mistresses, all airline stewardesses, so he carefully reckons their arrivals and departures; then a storm wrecks flight schedules and his own scheduling, etc. In this new film a Parisian antiques dealer is told by his partner and others that they don't really like him. The partner, a woman, bets him a Greek vase that he cannot produce a true friend within ten days.

Thus the machine is set up, and the protagonist enters it. He searches for a real friend, among people who know him well and less well. No luck. The film is to be film-length, but we know that we can't expect success for the first eighty minutes, so it burrows on. Watching it do its duty is something like watching acrobats—admirably graceful, but not greatly involving. We can nod approvingly, sometimes even smile.

We smile the most at the protagonist, because he is played by Daniel Auteuil, one of the best of screen actors. He does what he has to do with marvelous technical fluency while he manages to make us believe what he says. But there is an insuperable difficulty with the story. We cannot believe that nobody really likes Auteuil. Presumably the producers didn't want to give the character repellent qualities. They wanted him to play a remote man, yet still be Auteuil. So they were stuck; but not us.

This would be a good time to remember that Leconte a few years ago made *The Widow of St. Pierre* with Auteuil, a beautiful, profound drama. We can ascribe *My Best Friend*, casually amusing though it is, primarily to Leconte's and Auteuil's versatility.

A film from New Zealand, *Naming Number Two*, has a familiar storyline but an unintended jolt. Essentially this is one more family-party upheaval film: the members of a family come together for an anniversary or a birthday or some such, and instead of being a joyous occasion the gathering becomes a gallery of hurts and wrongs and jealousies. This is the first time I have seen such a story set in New Zealand. A matriarch living in a middle-class suburb of Auckland calls together her children—especially her grandchildren—to announce who will be her heir. The family members, of mixed colors, embrace; but the pleasant warmth soon boils over.

The jolt for us is that the grandmother, who was born on Fiji and came here with her (late) husband, is played by Ruby Dee. This made me sad. Ruby Dee is a premier American actress, a woman who, if she were white, would by now have had a career to rank her at the top of her profession—with a Lady Macbeth and a Hedda and a Medea, among others, behind her. (Among the too few Dee stage performances that I have seen, her Lena in the first American production of Fugard's *Boesman and Lena* was a particular treasure.) But this was not to be. Now in her eighties, Dee has been in more than ninety film and television roles, but so far as I know, she has never had a sufficiently good film role. The shock for me in this new picture was the fact that a major American actress had to go to New Zealand to find a leading role—had to go (I assume) not only because of her age but because she is black.

A further irony: she is not right for the part. The trouble is not that she lacks the accent that her family has; Dee could soon have acquired that. The trouble is her talent. Every other actor in the picture is aiming for and getting verisimilitude. Dee is too high for mere mimicry. Her speech is too thrilling, her voice too rich; even her gestures are too regal—not grandmotherly at all.

The writer-director Toa Fraser must have seen the stylistic difference between Dee and the others: either he couldn't or wouldn't alter it. Dee, too, must have seen the difference. Perhaps she justifies it with the point that her character was born in Fiji and thus speaks differently than her very New Zealand family. Or perhaps she just felt that, under the circumstances, the role ought to come to her instead of vice versa.

In any case, this film from the Antipodes includes an example of nonnaturalistic excellence. Stylistically, this actress sounds and behaves as if Christopher Plummer had been cast to play her brother. Her performance doesn't fit the film, but it is the one element that distinguishes it. ◆

Steven Pinker
STRANGLED BY ROOTS
The genealogy craze in America.

New technologies often have unforeseeable consequences. Michael Faraday could not have anticipated the rise of the electric guitar and its effects on our culture, nor did the inventors of the laser realize they had laid the ground for a thriving industry of tattoo removal. And it is safe to say that Watson and Crick could not have foreseen a day when an analysis of Oprah Winfrey's DNA would tell her that she was descended from the Kpelle people of the Liberian rainforest. "I feel empowered by this," she said upon hearing the news, overcoming her disappointment that her ancestors were not Zulu warriors.

A fascination with ancestry has long been part of the human condition, from the "begat's" of the Bible to the *Roots* miniseries and the restoration of Ellis Island. But with the advent of the Internet and genomic technology, genealogy has entered a new age. The past year has served up a series of high-profile revelations. The news that Barack Obama's ancestors owned slaves was a bit more surprising than the news that Strom Thurmond's did, but it was more surprising still to be told that among the Thurmond family's slaves were the ancestors of Al Sharpton. And Henry Louis Gates Jr., the host of the fascinating PBS series *African American Lives*, which explored the family trees of six prominent African Americans, was astounded to learn that half of his own ancestry was European, including Irish kinsmen on his father's side and two Jewish women on his mother's.

Few of us can expect that a search for ancestors will bring us an inheritance, a title, or a coat of arms: the rewards of genealogy are mostly psychological. As Winfrey put it, "Knowing your family history is knowing your worth." The sentiment, though, is dubious—not just on moral grounds but on biological ones. A closer look at the human drive to know one's

Steven Pinker is Johnstone Family Professor of Psychology at Harvard. His new book, The Stuff of Thought: Language as a Window Into Human Nature, will be published by Viking in September.

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family tree uncovers a number of tensions between our intuitions of kinship and the facts of kinship. Some of those facts show that the findings of the new genealogy should not have been surprising at all. And others, tacitly appreciated for millennia, have recently been neglected to our peril.

For all its fascination, kinship is a surprisingly neglected topic in the behavioral sciences. A Martian reading a textbook in psychology would get no inkling that human beings treated their relatives any differently from strangers. Many social scientists have gone so far as to claim that kinship is a social construction with no connection to biology. But assuming the creationists are wrong and humans are products of evolution, it would be surprising if our species entirely escaped the powerful forces that shape organisms' behavior toward their kin. Genetics and evolutionary theory predict that the biology of kinship should have biased our thoughts and emotions about relatives in several ways.

The first is the simple fact that blood relatives are likely to share genes. To the extent that minds are shaped by genomes, relatives are likely to be of like minds. Close relatives, whether raised together or apart, have been found to be correlated in intelligence, personality, tastes, and vices. The discovery of an ancestor is thus felt to reflect on the descendant, who may feel he has an explanation for the kind of person he is, and who can claim to have a dose of the ancestor's praiseworthy traits. A promotional spot for Coca-Cola in *African American Lives* juxtaposes footage of African Americans with images of traditional Africans and says, "She has her great-great-great-grandmother's eye for adornment. He is fit and agile, like his forefathers."

The similarities among blood relatives mean that they are likely to share values, and shared values can lead to easy solidarity because of what ecologists call mutualism and economists call positive externalities. A pair of associates with the same interests can benefit each other just by being selfish—always the most painless route to altruism. If two roommates have similar tastes in music, each will benefit the other every time she brings home a new CD, and each has a reason to value the other's well-being. To identify a blood relative, then, is to identify a potential soul mate. Adoptees who track down their biological parents and siblings often report an instant solidarity as they quickly discover shared quirks and passions.

A more direct tug of shared genes on family emotions comes from the phenomenon that biologists call inclusive fitness, kin selection, and nepotistic altruism. The overlap of genes among relatives does more than make them similar; it alters the dynamics of natural selection. Over evolutionary time, any gene that predisposed a person to be nice to a relative would have had some chance of helping out a copy of *itself* inside that relative, and the gene would have been favored by natural selection and entrenched in the genome (as long as the average benefit to the relative, discounted by the probability that the gene is shared, exceeds the average cost to the favor-doer). A sharing of genes at the genetic level sets the evolutionary stage for feelings of solidarity and affection at the emotional level, and that in turn shapes much of human life. In traditional societies, genetic relatives are more likely to live together, work together, protect each other, and adopt each other's orphaned children, and are less likely to attack, feud with, and kill each other. Even in modern societies, which tend to weaken ties of kinship, studies have shown that the more closely two people are genetically related, the more inclined they are to come to each other's aid, especially in life-or-death situations.

Solidarity between pairs of relatives is further amplified by the fact that they have *other* relatives in common. My brother and I are close not just because each of us has copies of genes in the other, but because we share a mother, a father, a sister, and nieces and nephews, so our genetic interests are yoked together. This triangular altruism also explains why nonblood relatives can feel various degrees of affinity—most dramatically in the case of a husband and wife, whose long-term genetic interests are fused in their children, and to a lesser extent in the case of stepsiblings and in-laws, as long as they are not in zero-sum competition for the common relative's affections or resources.

But now comes a crucial bit of arithmetic. In sexually reproducing species, every organism has two parents, and every organism makes up half the parentage of each of its offspring. The result is that as people are separated by more generations, they are related to an exponentially greater number of people, and their genetic relatedness to any of them plummets, also exponentially. Going upward, you have two parents, with whom you share half your genes apiece; four grandparents, with whom you share one-quarter; eight great-grandparents; sixteen great-great-grandparents; and so on. Going downward, if you and your descendants have two children apiece, then you'll have four grandchildren, eight great-grandchildren, and so on. And going sideways, you share half your genes with your sibling, one-eighth with each of your first cousins, one-thirty-second with each of your second cousins, and so on.

Exponential functions quickly explode to unimaginable magnitudes or peter out to infinitesimal ones, and the inability of our intuition to keep track of them leads to many paradoxes of kinship. In an old Smothers Brothers routine, Tommy explained why the population explosion is a myth. We have two parents, he noted, and four grandparents, eight great-grandparents, sixteen great-great-grandparents, and so on. The further back you go, the more ancestors you have. So, he concluded, "The population isn't growing—it's tapering off!" Like many of their jokes, this one depends on a subtle truth. If you assume twenty-five years per generation, you can calculate that you had around three billion ancestors at the time of the signing of the Magna Carta, one hundred billion during the Norman invasion, two quintillion at the fall of the Roman Empire, and around 1,200,000,000,000,000,000,000,000 at the birth of Jesus. Needless to say, the Earth did not contain a fraction of that many people in those eras.

The paradox is resolved by the realization that our ancestors must have married their cousins of various distances and removes, so that vast numbers of the slots in one's family tree are filled by the same individuals. Imagine, in an extreme case, that your parents were first cousins. Then two of your great-grandparents on your mother's side would also be your great-grandparents on your father's side—you would have six great-grandparents instead of eight. Genealogists call this "pedigree collapse": the necessity that as you trace your family tree backward, it will fan out for a number of generations until it begins to encompass most of the people in the available population, whereupon it falls back on itself, coinciding with the original growth of that population. The rate of collapse depends on the size of the pool of potential mates and the average rate and closeness of cousin marriages. But the fact that our ancestors never covered the surface of the Earth ten deep shows that medium-distant-cousin marriages must have been the rule rather than the exception over most of human history. This chronic incest, by the way, did not turn our ancestors into the cast of *Deliverance*. The degree of relatedness, and hence the risk that a harmful recessive gene will

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meet a copy of itself in a child, falls off a cliff as you move from siblings to first cousins to more distant cousins.

The same arithmetic that makes an individual's pedigree collapse onto itself also makes everyone's pedigree collapse into everyone else's. We are all related—not just in the obvious sense that we are all descended from the same population of the first humans, but also because everyone's ancestors mated with everyone else's at many points since that dawn of humanity. There aren't enough ancestors to go around for everyone to have a family tree of his or her own. So it is a mathematical necessity, not a surprise, that genealogy will turn up strange bedfellows. George W. Bush is a distant cousin of his electoral opponents Al Gore and John Kerry (as well as of Richard Nixon, Ernest Hemingway, Queen Elizabeth, and, through her, every European monarch). Gore, for his part, is a descendant of Charlemagne, and Kerry is a descendant of Mary, Queen of Scots—and presumably also (thanks to his recently-discovered-to-be-Jewish paternal grandfather) of rabbis, cantors, and medieval moneylenders. This brings up another corollary of the mathematics of kinship: a single mating between people from two ethnic groups results in all their descendants being related to both groups in perpetuity. So even occasional couplings across racial and ethnic lines can entangle family trees, explaining why humans, that peripatetic and sexually omnivorous species, are genetically fairly homogeneous, despite our worldwide distribution.

The genealogical ties connecting American presidents and European royalty are not a sign of some vast transatlantic ruling caste. *Every* noteworthy person is related to other noteworthy people (together, of course, with countless not-so-noteworthy people). One genealogist with too much time on his hands showed that the late Senator Alan Cranston was related to Emily Dickinson, George Plimpton, Margaret Mead, the actress Julie Harris, the Dow family of chemical fame, and Queen Geraldine of Albania. Another discovered that Tom Hanks, the star of *The Da Vinci Code*, has blood ties with many of the historical figures mentioned in the film, including William the Conqueror, Shakespeare, and Henry VIII. Also recently revealed is the fact that Paris Hilton is related to fellow celebrity jailbirds Zsa Zsa Gabor and G. Gordon Liddy. Finding kinship ties among famous people is shooting ducks in a barrel.

And before you brag about the talent or courage you share with some illustrious kinsman, remember that the exponential mathematics of relatedness successively halves the number of genes shared by relatives with every link separating them. You share only 3 percent of your genes with your second cousin, and the same proportion with your great-great-great-grandmother. It is important to remember that psychological traits are nowhere near completely heritable in the first place, so the chances that you got your eye for adornment from that ancestor in the gorgeous dashiki are rather small. Do not expect genetically inspired largesse from the rich relative uncovered by your genealogy service, either. A gift from a second cousin would have to result in a thirty-two-fold increase in the number of your surviving descendants compared to his for a desire to bestow it upon you to have evolved. The relentless decimation of resources (both genetic and financial) across generations is the rationale behind the feudal practice of primogeniture, in which all the family estate was bequeathed to the eldest son. And it is why in modern times family fortunes can dissipate so quickly—"three generations from shirtsleeves to shirtsleeves," as Nicholas Murray Butler put it.

The geometric decay of relatedness also takes some of the fun out of two of the main tools used by genetic-ancestry services: the analysis of mitochondrial DNA (which is passed from mother to daughter) and of Y-chromosomes (which are passed from father to son). Since they trace ancestry only through the all-female or all-male branch of your family tree, they can identify only one tendril, which diminishes exponentially the further back you go. Winfrey's mitochondrial DNA does not show that she is a Kpelle, but rather that she is one-sixty-fourth (or perhaps even 1/128th or 1/256th) Kpelle. Many African Americans who seek their paternal ancestor, and therefore a sense of their African roots, via Y-chromosome analysis discover to their dismay that this root lies in Germany or Scotland.

If family ties are so biologically tenuous, why does kinship loom so large in the human psyche? One reason is that our intuitions about kinship evolved when we lived in villages and bands whose small size and limited mobility ensured that most marriages were between closer cousins, and hence the genetic overlap between relatives was close enough to be biologically significant. Today we project these feelings of affinity onto relatives who are far more distant—indeed, arbitrarily distant, thanks to the wonders of Internet and DNA genealogy.

But the other reason is that our sense of kinship is triggered not by relatedness itself, but by the perception of relatedness. After all, when we encounter a possible relative, we generally do not demand a cheek swab and analyze its DNA. Instead we rely on cues that in the evolutionary past tended to *correlate* with relatedness. Recent experiments by Debra Lieberman, John Tooby, and Leda Cosmides have shown that two kinds of life experience are crucial in triggering family feelings toward siblings (such as doing them favors and being willing to donate a kidney to them). One consists of observing the sibling being cared for by one's mother when it was an infant. The other is having grown up in the same household as the sibling. That is why children adopted at birth can be emotionally close to their parents and siblings despite the lack of genetic overlap: the early close association sets off everyone's kinship detectors, a kind of benign illusion. And because these experiences also trigger repugnance at the thought of having sex with the relative, incest avoidance is not perfectly correlated with biological relatedness. Unrelated children who are brought up together (like nursery-mates in kibbutzim) tend to shun each other as sexual partners in adulthood, as if they were siblings. And children who meet a parent or sibling for the first time in adulthood can find him or her sexually attractive, as the novelist Kathryn Harrison recounted in *The Kiss*, her memoir of a four-year affair with her father.

When it comes to individual people, then, kinship is in the mind of the beholder. That creates an opening through which manipulators can flood people's kinship sense with cues that mimic the signals of biological relatedness. This kind of mind control is a strong temptation to anyone who wants to foster cohesion among people who are not closely related. Contrary to a shibboleth of the American right, family values do not uphold religion and country; they subvert them. An extended family is a rival coalition to any other group, held together not by an ideology or social contract or common purpose but by brute genetic relatedness. And it is a coalition with an unfair advantage: relatives care for one another more than comrades do. Religions and political movements thus have to undermine family loyalties. Marxist collectivization and Moonie programming are obvious recent examples, but millennia before them Jesus momentously declared, "A man's foes shall be they of his own household. He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of

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me: and he that loveth son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me."

Successful coalitions often try to co-opt family feelings by tricking the brain into perceiving the coalition as kin. Though the most potent technique—forcing people to grow up in a single household—is impractical, other kinds of kinship illusion have repeatedly been invented. The anthropologist Alan Fiske notes that communal meals are one of the most common bonding rituals the world over, partly because they simulate family experiences, partly because people believe that you are what you eat, and so if you eat the same stuff you are the same stuff. Many tribes and coalitions (such as the Mafia) cut their fingers and rub them together to allow their blood to mingle, hence the expression "blood brothers." People also disfigure their bodies—by scarring, tattooing, piercing, hairstyling, and circumcision and other forms of genital mutilation—as if to make the group look like a separate race or species, biologically distinct from other human groups.

Language provides another way to co-opt the warm and fuzzy feelings people have toward their relatives. One common trick is the use of kinship metaphors: brethren, brotherhood, fraternity, sisterhood, sorority, the fatherland, the mother country, the family of man, and so on. These tactics are provably effective: experiments have shown that people are more convinced by a political speech if the speaker engages them with the language of kinship. Myths and ideologies are also commonly put to use. People are told that they are descended from a patriarch or a primeval couple, or that they are connected to a natal land, or that they came into being in the same act of creation, or that they are related to the same totemic animal.

In large part, the institutions of modernity depend on a dissolution of family ties. It is hard to run an effective organization if you cannot fire the knucklehead brother-in-law forced on you by your wife's family, nor can civil society function if the instruments of government are treated as the spoils of the most powerful local clan. Public safety is more effectively guaranteed by a disinterested police and court system than by a threat that your male relatives will avenge your murder, and national defense above all depends on the willingness of citizens to neglect the bonds of kinship. In *The Godfather: Part II*, Sonny Corleone upbraids Michael for his sympathy with the men who enlisted after Pearl Harbor: "They're saps because they risk their lives for strangers. Your country ain't your blood. Remember that."

In the struggle between society and family, the exponential mathematics of kinship ordinarily works to the advantage of society. As time passes or groups get larger, family trees intertwine, dynasties dissipate, and nepotistic emotions get diluted. But families can defend themselves with a potent tactic: they can graft the twig tips of the family tree together by cousin marriage. If you force your daughter to marry her first cousin, then your son-in-law is your nephew, her father-in-law is your brother, your parents' estate will be worth twice as much per grandchild, and the couple will never have to bicker about which side of the family to visit on holidays. For these reasons, clans and dynasties in many cultures encourage first-or second-cousin marriage, tolerating the slightly elevated risk of genetic disease. Not only does cousin marriage amplify the average degree of relatedness among members of the clan, but it enmeshes them in a network of triangular relationships, with kinsmen valuing each other because of their many mutual kin as well as their own relatedness. As a result, the extended family, clan, or tribe can emerge as a powerfully cohesive bloc—and one with little common cause with other families, clans, or tribes in the larger polity that comprises them. The anthropologist Nancy Thornhill has shown that the prohibitions against incestuous marriages in most societies are not public-health measures aimed at reducing birth defects but the society's way of fighting back against extended families.

In January 2003, during the buildup to the war in Iraq, the journalist and blogger Steven Sailer published an article in *The American Conservative* in which he warned readers about a feature of that country that had been ignored in the ongoing debate. As in many traditional Middle Eastern societies, Iraqis tend to marry their cousins. About half of all marriages are consanguineous (including that of Saddam Hussein, who filled many government positions with his relatives from Tikrit). The connection between Iraqis' strong family ties and their tribalism, corruption, and lack of commitment to an overarching nation had long been noted by those familiar with the country. In 1931, King Faisal described his subjects as "devoid of any patriotic idea … connected by no common tie, giving ear to evil; prone to anarchy, and perpetually ready to rise against any government whatsoever." Sailer presciently suggested that Iraqi family structure and its mismatch with the sensibilities of civil society would frustrate any attempt at democratic nation-building.

Outside a small family circle, the links of kinship are biologically trifling, vulnerable to manipulation, and inimical to modernity. For all that, the almost mystical bond that we feel with those whom we perceive as kin continues to be a potent force in human affairs. It is no small irony that in an age in which technology allows us to indulge these emotions as never before, our political culture systematically misunderstands them. ◆

Edward N. Luttwak
POWER AND PRUDENCE

MAKING WAR TO KEEP PEACE
By Jeane J. Kirkpatrick
(HarperCollins, 384 pp., $26.95)

Jeane J. Kirkpatrick became famous as the Reagan administration's combative ambassador to the United Nations from 1981 to 1985, but few believed that the almost gamine former college professor could have much of a voice in shaping foreign policy, what with tough guy Al Haig and big man George Shultz in command at the State Department, and successive National Security Advisers happy to keep her in New York making noisy speeches while they quietly made policy in the White House. The implicit assumption of that line of reasoning was that the late-to-rise and early-to-bed Ronald Reagan himself was not all that important in the Reagan administration, so that even if it were true that he had a particular regard for Kirkpatrick, it would hardly matter. Besides, few believed the tale that Reagan had appointed her after reading her pieces in *Commentary*—that magazine's articles run to several pages, after all, and Reagan supposedly read so little that as president he even received his daily intelligence briefing in the form of bite-sized videos. With Reagan a mere cipher manipulated

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by his handlers, Kirkpatrick could have no White House support against powerful men with bureaucracies to serve them, and therefore no power.

The newly published Reagan diaries overturn all of the above. We encounter a shrewd and watchful president who treated Kirkpatrick as a valuable colleague in reforming the status quo at the United Nations, in which the members of the "non-aligned bloc" collected their American aid before firmly aligning their votes with the Soviet Union on almost every issue, decorating the proceedings with frequent diatribes against the United States. Observing today's ultra-tame United Nations, where inferiority complexes are vented only in such hopeless sub-venues as the Human Rights Council (China, Cuba, and Saudi Arabia are members, the United States is not), one can scarcely imagine the General Assembly follies of those days, in which the perfumed representatives of smelly dictatorships competed in devising new accusations against the United States. The State Department thought all this was inevitable and harmless, and it vehemently opposed any strong response at the United Nations, let alone bilateral reprisals such as cutting aid. But Reagan did not agree, and he firmly supported Kirkpatrick's counter-attacks:

> Tuesday, July 28 [1981]
> Met also with Jeanne [*sic*] Kirkpatrick. She says the U.N. is a worse can of worms than even she had anticipated. We've agreed the U.S. has got to get tough and maybe walk out a few times.

Alexander Haig as secretary of state was jealous of his prerogatives, which extended far and wide in his own estimation, certainly embracing all American diplomatic missions, including the one in New York—this notwithstanding the inconvenient truth that Jeane Kirkpatrick had her own seat on the National Security Council as proof absolute of her non-subordination to the State Department. Inevitably there were serious policy disputes that could be resolved only by the president himself—and for a president who wants to stay in the loop to be able to exercise his own power, there is nothing much wrong with that, so long as public rows are avoided. Reagan knew the kingly craft, and his carefully balanced decisions were calculated to require further appeals to himself, enhancing his control over policy.

> Monday, May 31 [1982]
> Back to office to meet with Jeanne [*sic*] Kirkpatrick. She and Al H. have been at each others throats. Later in the day met with Al. Bill Clark at both meetings—thank Heaven. As it turns out there is some right and some wrong on both sides. I think we can get a lid on it with no further damage.

Reagan thus treated the two as equals—a win for Kirkpatrick, who had only a small U.N. staff at her command; a loss for the head of the vast State Department. As it turned out, Kirkpatrick remained at her post for the full term and more, leaving only in 1985, long after Haig was forced to resign from the State Department. Even after that she retained her access and her influence:

> Tuesday, February 24 [1987]
> After lunch a good meeting with Jeane Kirkpatrick reporting on her meeting with Gorbachev & Sakharov to Geo.B.[ush].,Geo S.[hultz], Cap W.[einberger] Frank C.[arlucci] Don R.[egan] & me. A very useful & good session.

And it really was, for it set the stage for the transformation of American policy—in the diary Gorbachev soon became Gorby—often naughty, never quite evil.

Making War to Keep Peace, the book that Jeane Kirkpatrick completed not long before her death last December, is not a memoir. It is an investigation of an issue that *après* Iraq easily detains attention: what are the proper criteria for the use of force when there is no immediate attack to repel and when no vital interests are at stake? (Read: Somalia, Haiti, Bosnia, Kosovo.) When should the government of the United States invade foreign countries, unilaterally or multilaterally?

One lesson of recent wars, both medium and small, is that in spite of the ill repute of unilateralism and the virtuous connotations of multilateralism, it actually does not matter very much if allies can be rounded up or not. These days the distribution of usefully deployable military power is so spectacularly uneven that our most valiant British ally cannot quite sustain 16,000 troops in Afghanistan and Iraq, while the others cannot match half that number. Even a total round-up of all that NATO, plus the Russians, plus the Chinese, could sustain in an expeditionary deployment overseas, plus all the odds and sods that respond to a U.N. summons for peacekeeping troops (there is money in it for the likes of the Bangladesh East Bengal Regiment), would yield a total force smaller than the U.S. Marine Corps, and infinitely less capable.

True, even the Marine Corps is mostly ineffective against enemies who refuse to wear uniforms and to assemble in conveniently targetable combat formations—alas, the only enemies that are encountered these days; but the others can be downright embarrassing. There are many cases of units in U.N. or even NATO service that simply refused to fight when the situation urgently required it and the rules of engagement definitely allowed them to do so. There are quite a few cases of abject surrenders to outnumbered and outgunned aggressors, including African child soldiers, and at least one case of a complete national contingent (a Guinean unit in Sierra Leone) that promptly sold all its U.N.-supplied weapons, ammunition, and uniforms to the rebels they were supposed to fight, then demanded to be resupplied. (They were.)

Politically, too, it is now clear that even the broadest multilateralism would not help much in facing today's enemies. For Islamist insurgents, there is no difference between American, French, Russian, or Chinese infidels, and they are even more antagonistic to Muslim rulers who reject their ultra-fanaticism to cooperate with the United States. Had Bush & Co. succeeded in building a vast coalition to invade Iraq in 2003 instead of rushing ahead in fear that the whole thing would be called off if there were enough time for common sense to prevail—had the Russians, Chinese, Egyptians, Saudis, and French too come along for the ride to Baghdad—it would have made no difference to the insurgents. Variegated as they are, none would have recognized the legitimacy of the invaders and therefore desisted from fighting. For the Sunni Arabs of Iraq, no form of elected majority rule is acceptable. Always a minority, they always dominated the priest-ridden Shia, who are fatally divided by deadly priestly rivalries; and they firmly believe that they can dominate the Shia again as soon as the invaders leave.

So even if it had been a perfectly multilateral invasion that had removed Saddam and established an elected government, the Sunni Arabs would be fighting now just as they are, and so obviously would the Islamists who are now franchised by Al Qaeda. For them, the Twelver Shia of Iraq and Iran are worse than infidels: they are apostates who deserve death and whose heretical mosques must be destroyed. As for the Shia, they favor majority rule because they are the majority, but notoriously they are even more hostile to infidels than the Sunnis.

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(The supposed moderate Ayatollah Ali al-Sistani refuses to shake hands with Christians or Jews.) In fact, some of the Shia are so hostile to infidels that they attack the very troops that are protecting them from Sunni Arab revanchism.

It is the same in Lebanon now, where the U.N. force (UNIFIL) that is supposed to secure the southern part of the country has not been immunized from attack by its impeccable multilateralism—indeed, not even by the groveling appeasement of Hezbollah and Syria perpetrated by the major participating governments. It is poetic injustice that it was the Spanish who suffered the first casualties. It is fairly easy to close dishonorable deals with extremists; but in the realm of Islam there is always somebody a tad more extreme who will still send assassins to kill infidels.

In spite of her own diplomatic antecedents, Kirkpatrick's criteria for American military intervention disregard the uni/multi distinction that remains sacrosanct for so many in spite of all evidence to the contrary. Of course that is just what many would expect from a registered neoconservative from the *Commentary* stable with a particular dislike for U.N.-branded multilateralism—but that is not the point at all. For Kirkpatrick, it did not matter if the use of force was amply multilateral or purely unilateral so long as it was justified by reasons so compelling that most Americans would necessarily accept them once informed of the facts, or else by the humanitarian urgencies of imminent genocide. She therefore approved of the Bosnian and Kosovo interventions because many lives were saved by them, and because they allowed the United States to re-affirm its leadership at small cost, and because it was all done with air power with no American ground forces engaged, greatly reducing the risk of casualties. She approved of the invasion of Grenada, which did require boots on the ground, because American medical students were in immediate danger; and she would have approved of an invasion of Rwanda to stop genocide, especially because it could have been done with few troops. More than half a million were sent to fight the first Iraq war, but for Kirkpatrick the national-interest reasons were powerful, and she approved of that war as well.

Of course, for the anti-Semitic commentators from Washington to London to Tehran who keep saying that it was not really Bush, Cheney, Rumsfeld, or Rice who decided to invade Iraq but rather their subordinates with Jewish names, "neoconservative" is merely a euphemism for the eternally conspiring Jew, and Kirkpatrick obviously does not fit the bill. But there is another valid definition of a foreign policy neoconservative: a prudent activist. A resilient optimism about the United States and its potential to do good was the source of the activism, while an erudite knowledge of the complexities of the world induced prudence—the collected *Commentary* articles of Walter Laqueur alone would amount to a veritable education in the ironies and paradoxes of international politics. It is no accident that eager proponents of the 2003 Iraq war such as Richard Perle and Paul Wolfowitz, prototypical milk-fed carnivores, never wrote for *Commentary* during the Cold War years, nor read it most likely—they were too busy politicking to study the countries and cultures on which they pronounced so readily.

On many of the great issues of the day, Kirkpatrick and Laqueur (and the present writer) were distinctly more cautious than the majority of elite opinion. Nuclear arms control is a case in point. Many believed that because the destructive capacity of nuclear weapons grossly exceeded the culminating point of military effectiveness, American-Soviet arms-control negotiations could do much good and no harm. The neoconservatives disagreed, and the record shows that they were right: the Soviet non-nuclear military build-up actually accelerated after the 1972 accords. It was the same with their firm opposition to détente diplomacy in general: it was only when Gorbachev came to power after Reagan repudiated détente that its enabling role in preserving the decrepit Soviet Union became clear to all. The common denominator was prudence with the public weal, the refusal to follow supposedly universal arms-control or détente theories, or any other ambitious theories that made no allowance for the particular historical experience and political culture of the Russians, nor for the specific Bolshevik ideology whose Marxist humanism had long since been stripped away to leave only the Leninist intoxication with unfettered power.

There is no point in prolonging the suspense: while accepting its legality under previous U.N. resolutions inasmuch as Saddam had violated the 1991 cease-fire conditions, Kirkpatrick firmly opposed the Iraq War II of Bush II after vigorously supporting the Iraq War I of Bush I—except for its abrupt termination with Saddam Hussein still in control of large undestroyed forces of proven competence in fighting unarmed civilians. As Allan Gerson points out in his succinct postscript to *Making War to Keep Peace*, Kirkpatrick opposed Iraq II because she was careful, as befits a true neoconservative. In her book, she writes that she recognized no compelling reason to send American troops in harm's way in any of the arguments advanced for the war. Yes, it would have been right to remove Saddam Hussein from power in 1991 when all was ready and set to finish him off easily, but by 2003 it required a full-scale war, and that was not justified. True, Saddam would become a danger again if the U.N. embargo were lifted. If that happened and he did re-arm in threatening ways, then action could well be justified—but none of that had happened by 2003. Above all, Kirkpatrick (like the present writer) totally rejected the true motive of the war, which was to establish a successful democracy in the heart of the Arab world, to lead the way for the democratization of all the Arab states.

The advocates of the war from Bush down believed that democratization was the valid answer to September 11, that it was the best antidote to Islamic fanaticism as well as far better in itself than the autocracies and dictatorships that rule the Arab world. In other words, the armed forces of the United States were engaged in 2003 not to repel an immediate danger but to carry out a political experiment on the largest possible scale. I suggested at the time that if the experiment had to be attempted, it was much better to start with a micro-state such as the sheikdom of Fujairah or Sharjah, whose few thousand inhabitants could be individually re-educated one by one—or deported to Las Vegas condos if they proved to be too recalcitrant. In her book Kirkpatrick writes that it was utterly imprudent to believe that a democracy could be created out of nothing, with no cultural foundations and no historical preparation. Iraq in 2003 was not Germany or Japan in 1945—it had neither decades of predictatorial parliamentarism nor the national unity of both countries.

In her concluding chapter on Afghanistan and Iraq, Kirkpatrick lists the preconditions of democracy: "the rule of law, an elite with a shared commitment to democratic procedure, a sense of citizenship, and habits of trust and cooperation." Noting that all were absent in Iraq, Kirkpatrick condemns the Bush administration for its failure to perform "the due diligence required for reasoned policy-making because [it] failed to address the aftermath of invasion." In other words, the Bushies were spectacularly uncare-

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ful in wanting to transform a country of which they knew nothing. We may be certain that many a secretary in the Pentagon did more research on her next holiday destination than Secretary Rumsfeld and his officials did on Iraq before sending scores of thousands of Americans to visit the place. I was myself present at a pre-war military planning session in which it became clear that a couple of junior infantry officers who had done a few days of Internet searching knew more about the Jazidis, Nestorians, Shiite dynasties, Sunni tribes, and the different varieties of the Kurds than the proponents of the war, who kept talking about a nonexistent nationality called "Iraqis."

In a first chapter on Iraq I, Kirkpatrick lays out her initial set of national-interest criteria, which definitely do not include forcible nation-building, and then provides an extensive counterpoint in the next chapter on the Somalia interventions, where American policy was again deformed by ignorance of the place under Bush I, later compounded by the anti-military phobia of the Clinton White House and the egregious incompetence and hidden political agendas of U.N. Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali. The outcome was ignominious failure at all levels, which ended with the abandonment of Somalia to the Somalis, whose many virtues do not include the ability to govern themselves. Like all U.N. secretaries-general, Boutros-Ghali picked up his Manhattan groupies who excuse all U.N. depredations (even those of Kojo Annan), and it will be interesting to see if any will now defend him from Kirkpatrick's devastating condemnation.

In the Balkans, Boutros-Ghali systematically opposed effective action against the Serbs under military policies that gave a bad name to impotence, whereas in Somalia his goals were insanely ambitious, securing a resolution in March 1993 that called for disarming all Somali clans and factions by U.N. troops under his own supreme command. The task was impossible: every Somali has a weapon and also knows how to hide it when necessary. Napoleon might have paled at the thought; but the Clinton administration spurned the advice of all officials who had ever been in Somalia and accepted both the impossible goal and the improbable supreme commander, and American soldiers died because of it—especially needlessly because that particular debacle could have been averted by common sense at many points up until the very eve of the disaster.

The Balkan wars were a good deal more complicated, and even those who have read more than one of the many books that have already appeared on the subject will want to read Kirkpatrick's hundred pages on Bosnia and Kosovo. Since she knew how decisions were actually made, her depiction of the perverse interaction between U.N. disabilities, NATO limitations, the feeble intrigues of Europe's ex–Great Powers, and Washington's inhibitions is remarkably illuminating. She shows why in the end only the United States could stop mass atrocities that were perpetrated within easy reach of Vienna, just across the water from Italian beach resorts where millions of European tourists pensively chose between lasagna and tagliatelle, while bombardments, mass murder, and starvation continued month after month, year after year. There were both incipient genocide and threats to international peace that the United States could have stopped at a low cost by a bit of bombing and much forceful diplomacy. Hence Kirkpatrick supported the limited use of force, which proved to be sufficient.

Earlier, in a chapter on the vicissitudes of Haiti under its unelected and elected dictators, Kirkpatrick is more categorical. After carefully examining the new "failed states" doctrine that would abrogate sovereignty to justify benevolent interventions where government has broken down and the state no longer functions (Boutros-Ghali was, of course, an enthusiast), she concludes that this new colonialism was worse than the old, because at least some incidental good was done while extracting gold and such, while attempts to synthesize modern democracies for populations with quite other priorities can only turbo-charge their travails. Even in destitute Haiti, it is not difficult to organize an election—one needs only a supply of ballot boxes and slips of paper. But to organize a functioning democracy where none ever existed before, as in Haiti, Iraq, or Afghanistan—well, that is a bit more difficult. A century or two is usually required (that being my own reason for opposing Iraq II—call it impatience if you will). An immediate withdrawal after the destruction of the regime was never a possible option, while it was and is absurd to employ much of the deployable strength of the U.S. Army and Marine Corps as a Mesopotamian constabulary *sine die*. Jeane J. Kirkpatrick was an interventionist, not an isolationist, but first of all she believed in being careful. ◆

Alexander Stille
THE HERO MACHINE

GARIBALDI: INVENTION OF A HERO
By Lucy Riall
(Yale University Press, 496 pp., $35)

Until recently, the publication of yet another life of Garibaldi might have been greeted with a shrug and a yawn. What new could possibly be said about a figure whose every word and every deed has been memorialized or picked apart in children's textbooks, scholarly histories, and a plethora of biographies both hagiographic and critical? Fatigue with the lore of the Italian unification and skepticism about its founding fathers were plain already in 1926, when Piero Gobetti published his famous essay *"Risorgimento Senza Eroi,"* or "The Risorgimento Without Heroes."

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There was already an awareness that the creation of the Italian state had been a deeply flawed and inadequate process, championed by a small cultural elite, carried out more by diplomatic maneuvering and the power of foreign troops than by a great popular uprising; and also that unification had left Italy almost as divided as before, a country where old and deep allegiances to family, town, region, and church continued to compete with the new nation for the loyalties of most Italians. From the 1960s on, when historians became more interested in "history from below," the fascination with the "great men" of the Risorgimento seemed more like quaint nineteenth-century hero worship than serious history.

But then the intellectual climate changed again. In recent decades, new scholarship on the nature and history of nationalism has opened up a new space for a reconsideration of Italian unification and its heroes. In 1983, there appeared two groundbreaking books on nationalism, Benedict Anderson's *Imagined Communities* and Ernest Gellner's *Na-*

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tions and Nationalism. Each in its own way argued that nationalism, rather than a hoary and innate form of identity (as all nationalisms insist they are), is in fact an exceedingly modern phenomenon that was made possible not least by the invention of printing, industrialization, and mass communication.

Before the invention of print and the creation of large-scale markets, most people, almost all of whom were farmers, lived in a highly circumscribed world made up of face-to-face contacts. Their identities were local, defined by religion and by a series of feudal rights and obligations, by dialects and customs that were limited to their small places. The leading powers—the Holy Roman Empire, the Austro-Hungarian Empire, the Ottoman Empire—were multinational, polyglot dynasties. The royal families of Europe intermarried and traded thrones. No one questioned the fact that the same Swiss family, the Hapsburgs, governed both Spain and Austria. In the eighteenth century, the British preferred to import a non-English-speaking king from Germany in order to avoid having a Catholic branch take the throne—something that would have been unthinkable a century later. In other words, nationalism as we have come to know it—based on larger unities of territory, language, and culture—did not exist.

At that time, popular culture, expressed in a multitude of dialects, was local, while learned and religious culture—which took place in Latin—was transnational. Instruction in universities and seminaries was conducted in Latin, and learned men corresponded across borders in Latin. Latin was the administrative language of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, which is why there was no reason for Czechs, Serbs, or Hungarians to feel discriminated against at the court of Vienna. But with the growth of capitalism and print, increasing numbers of people learned to read not in Latin but in their vernacular tongues, and a growing commercial and professional class, increasingly literate and prosperous, challenged the traditional hierarchies of church and aristocracy. Growing nation-states raised large standing armies, and nationalism—now defined by language and culture—served as the social glue of a new order.

Print made it possible, through dictionaries and national academies, to establish official national languages and to promote the idea of a national culture. It was open and upwardly mobile for emerging groups within the nation, but exclusive in relation to those outside it. At the same time, establishing some tongues as national languages meant reducing others to the status of mere dialects, creating privileged in-groups and disadvantaged out-groups. Anderson and Gellner both emphasized the role of intellectuals—who created dictionaries and grammar books, collected folk music and fairy tales, resurrected national epics and wrote national histories—in forging a culture that made the love of nation seem as natural as mother's milk and made dying for the fatherland the most elementary filial piety.

Although this scholarship developed outside of Italy, the Risorgimento is a perfect case study for this kind of self-conscious nation-building. Beginning in the early nineteenth century, Italian intellectuals began publishing a stream of novels, memoirs, and journalistic articles promoting the idea of *italianità*, or Italianness, and writing a national narrative of Italy in which the glory that was Rome languished under the yoke of foreign domination and its people longed for nothing more than national unity. Since political speech was carefully monitored by the powers that controlled most of Italy—the Austrians in the north, the papacy in the center, and the Spanish Bourbons in the south—the cultural expression of *italianità* became a way of building a political identity while avoiding censorship. The operas of Verdi were commonly regarded as allegories of unification and patriotism; crowds of patriots would shout "*Viva Verdi!*", the great composer's name serving as an acronym for *Vittorio Emanuele, Re d'Italia*, or "Victor Emanuel, King of Italy," who became the monarch of unified Italy. An extraordinary number of those who joined Mazzini and Garibaldi were scribblers, poets, and painters; in the service of the cause they fought battles and composed anthems, poems, pamphlets, and memoirs. Those who carried out unification—mostly from the middle and upper classes—were aware that their literary and military efforts had made only mild inroads into the population of the new Italy, the vast majority of whom were illiterate and spoke a local dialect rather than Italian. "We have made Italy," one of Italy's founding fathers, Massimo d'Azeglio, is reported to have said. "Now we must make the Italians."

Lucy Riall has taken brilliant advantage of the opportunities created by the new understanding of nationalism. Her biography of Garibaldi is innovative, exciting, masterful. Together with the Italian scholar Alberto Banti, Riall has developed a fresh and much more interesting way of telling the story of the Risorgimento. In the traditional telling of the tale, Garibaldi was the instinctive man of action, the valorous soldier who threw himself into the breach wherever freedom called, but whose political ideas and political career were of negligible importance. He was the unthinking "arm" of unification, while the nobler body parts are assigned to others—Giuseppe Mazzini, the tireless promoter of nationalism, was the soul; King Victor Emanuel II was the heart; and his prime minister, Count Camillo Cavour, was the brain. (This corporeal metaphor was created after unification to create an illusion of organic unity.)But Riall shows that Garibaldi, along with being a soldier, was also an important, innovative, and supremely modern political leader. The struggle for Italian unification, from the 1840s until 1870, coincided with the emergence of the penny newspaper and a mass reading public, and by those means Garibaldi became one of the first international political celebrities. Italian unification was a popular cause in countries around the world, much as Vietnam, the solidarity movement in Poland, or the cause of the Palestinians have been in our time. Newspapers and journals in England, the United States, Germany, France, and elsewhere sent journalists and illustrators to document Garibaldi's military exploits, and they produced special albums that were valued collectors' items and commercial successes. Garibaldi shrewdly cultivated journalists, and crafted his cult by the publication of memoirs and pamphlets, and maintained a vast international network of contacts through his ceaseless letter-writing. He was able to draw on this extraordinary publicity machine to raise money, weapons, and volunteers from across Europe and the United States for military operations in Italy.

Anticipating Che Guevara by a century, Garibaldi more or less invented the persona of the modern freedom fighter. (Unlike Che, he was actually interested in freedom.) After participating in wars of national liberation in Latin America, he adopted the look of the *gaucho*, wearing a poncho, a scruffy beard, a simple red shirt, and a dashing handkerchief about his throat—a free and rugged horseman who was content to use his saddle as a pillow. Garibaldi knew how to strike a pose. When he wanted to win over a middle-class audience, he could suddenly appear with a trimmed beard in the uniform of a Piedmontese general, and the next day he would be back in his poncho and red shirt when he needed to play the role of the anti-establishment rabble-rouser.

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Garibaldi was born in 1807 in Nice, which at the time was part of Savoy, an independent state with its capital in Turin that included the northwestern corner of Italy known as Piedmont, as well as Corsica and a sliver of what is now southeastern France. In 1720, the duchy of Savoy became the Kingdom of Sardinia and incorporated the city of Genoa and its surrounding area. Sardinia, where the population spoke various local dialects and the ruling elite spoke mostly French, was an unlikely launching pad for the struggle of Italian unification. Indeed, both Mazzini and Garibaldi were forced into exile because of their roles in nationalist conspiracies. Mazzini, the indefatigable propagandist, wound up in London, the communications capital of Europe. Garibaldi, a sailor, left Europe for South America and became involved in revolutionary politics in the new world.

As early as 1843, Mazzini wrote to one of his followers in South America to say that Garibaldi was a figure who could be extremely useful to their movement. There was already an Italian-language Mazzinian press that began to sing Garibaldi's praises and to help establish his reputation as "the hero of two worlds." To her credit, Riall does not go the extreme of claiming that Garibaldi was an entirely "invented" hero. He did in fact play a significant role in helping the young nation of Uruguay fight off domination from Argentina, and he was even made the head of the Uruguayan navy. Consistently, over more than thirty years, he showed considerable courage under fire, adopting bold and innovative tactics in fighting larger, organized armies with smaller, irregular troops. Imitating the idea of the French Legion, he invented something called the Italian Legion and recruited some six hundred men whom he led in battle. In 1846, they fended off a much larger Argentine force at a battle in San Antonio del Salto, an event that was followed closely in Europe and became a cornerstone of Garibaldi's legend.

Garibaldi's military campaigns also had a carefully considered political dimension, which he managed shrewdly in a world increasingly dominated by public opinion. He refused any honors or rewards after the great victory at San Antonio, and strictly forbade his troops to accept any—something that helped to establish an important feature of his legend as a noble, disinterested revolutionary. Mazzini asked his people in Montevideo to have a painting made of Garibaldi so that lithographs could be produced and distributed. "The early fame of Garibaldi was the result of a deliberate strategy conceived by Mazzini and enthusiastically endorsed by his followers, including Garibaldi himself," Riall writes. Garibaldi became a household name across Europe for his involvement in the revolts of 1848–1849, in which Sicily rose up against the Bourbons of Naples, and Milan and Venice revolted against Austria, and Mazzini and Garibaldi briefly established a republic in Rome, ousting the papacy. The revolts in Italy stimulated similar uprisings elsewhere in Europe, where many traditional, authoritarian governments were either toppled or gave ground to new popular movements. In the age of the telegraph, political events and movements had become planetary and nearly instantaneous. (Globalization is not as unprecedented a phenomenon as we think.) Censorship was lifted in many countries, and the doings of Garibaldi—who fought in all the major theaters of the rebellions of 1848–1849—were chronicled around the world.

As Riall effectively shows, Garibaldi was both the cause and the effect of a major change in Western political culture. As a man of the people from a humble background, with his simple and unconventional style of dress, Garibaldi represented the aspirations of new political classes who were trying to break into a closed hierarchical system. The Chartists in Britain gathered more than three million signatures to push for universal suffrage in a country that allowed only a tiny minority of its people to vote. Pressing the cause of national liberation in Italy was an acceptable way of channeling popular feeling that also had deep local roots. Half a million wildly enthusiastic people turned out when Garibaldi visited London in 1864, and Garibaldi poems and songs, a Garibaldi hymn, and even a "Garibaldi polka" were written for the occasion. He drew huge crowds wherever he went. But his visit was cut short before he could reach the big working-class towns of Manchester, Newcastle, and Glasgow. "Garibaldi—thank God!—is gone," Queen Victoria wrote to her daughter after his departure. "It has been a very absurd and humiliating exhibition and was becoming very dangerous by the connection with Mazzini and all the worst refugees."

Garibaldi, Riall argues persuasively, was a transitional figure whose cultic power derived in part from combining old and new forms of reverence. "It is no coincidence that the mid-century revolution in publishing coincided with the first great age of nationalism, and with the creation and the consolidation of nation states in much of Europe," Riall writes. "The unprecedented scope and scale of Garibaldi's fame as a popular leader were largely maintained by the publishing and entertainment industry." Riall adduces numerous sources to show that part of Garibaldi's appeal was that he seems to conform to the type of the romantic hero of early nineteenth-century novels. Numerous contemporaries compared him to Walter Scott's Ivanhoe and Rob Roy, the latter a figure described by his creator as "wild, irregular … and unearthly" in his appearance, an "outlawed robber" who had been pushed outside by the law of an unjust society, but "kind and gentle" by nature, a loving husband with a strict code of morality. That Garibaldi understood the value of being a figure of romance is clear from the fact that he gave a draft of his memoirs to Alexandre Dumas, one of the greatest historical mythmakers of his time, who recast and published them.

Another element of the Garibaldi romance was his marriage in 1842 to his Brazilian wife Anita, a skillful horsewoman who accompanied Garibaldi on some of his military adventures. She died with him in 1849, pregnant, accompanying his troops as they fled French and Austrian troops after the fall of the Roman Republic. This, too, fit the story line of Rob Roy: she was such a devoted highlander that she could not live outside the highlands, and he could not bear to be separated from her. Not least as a consequence of this tale of love, thinly disguised versions of Garibaldi began to appear in novels of the period. "Garibaldi's popularity in mid-century liberal Europe was the result both of the spread of democratic ideas and of their fit with the genres of romantic popular fiction," Riall explains. "Garibaldi's political appeal was part of a radical style which was structured and told like a story."

Riall also emphasizes the importance of Garibaldi's virility and good looks: "Like the Risorgimento hero, Garibaldi is virile and attractive: he smolders in long hair and flowing clothes. He is of a 'noble and lofty character,' personally modest yet rebellious, and defiant in the face of defeat.… The fashioning of an imaginary Garibaldi tailored specifically to the demands of women readers needs to be noted." He made speeches and wrote pamphlets specifically addressed to women, and many women around the world became passionate champions of his cause. This made sense in the sexual politics of the time. Women could not vote in their own countries, but it was considered entirely acceptable for

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them to play an active role in the cause of Italian freedom. The sexualization of politics also began much longer ago than we like to think.

Riall does not overemphasize the modernity of Garibaldi; she recognizes that he is not quite our contemporary. One of the interesting cultural differences that separates us from the culture of the Garibaldi cult is the almost willful use of wholly invented stories and details in the vast majority of Garibaldi biographies that circulated at the time. Even though there was plenty of dramatic and novelistic material from the real life of Garibaldi to draw on, writers seemed to go out of their way to fabricate stories and details. As Riall observes, conforming to the canons of contemporary romance and melodrama was much more important than any notion of journalistic accuracy and historical verisimilitude. "One of the most striking features of this script," she writes, "was the apparently seamless blend of fact and fiction, of novelistic fantasy and political truth, and this blend … seems to have been at the heart of Garibaldi's public success."

Along with tapping into the culture of the romantic novel, Garibaldi also struck more ancient chords. Riall reproduces popular prints in which Garibaldi is pictured in the role of Christ. In this folk Christian scheme, even Garibaldi's many failures and defeats could be seen in a different light. The topos of the defeated hero, the betrayed and crucified Christ, may have strengthened Garibaldi's hold on the popular imagination. Secularly speaking, this may also have been the conscious strategy of rebels who had to find a way of using modest resources to defeat much stronger enemies. A friend of Mazzini's suggested that he recognized that he was hoping to score a political rather than a military victory in 1848: "[he] knows that the war cannot bring any great success, but his idea is to attract the attention of Europe and to get sympathy for the Republic and for the relentless struggle for freedom." This was to become an essential tactic of modern liberation movements: the transformation of military defeat into political victory.

After the failure of the revolutions of 1848–1849, Garibaldi, badly wounded and grieving over the death of Anita, removed himself for a time from active public life. He traveled to New York, where crowds of well-wishers were prepared to make him the toast of the town. Instead he chose to stay out of the limelight, living in Staten Island and Westchester and working as, among other things, a candlemaker. Intentionally or not, it was another shrewd move, since other refugees of the 1848 revolutions destroyed their reputations by becoming caught up in the American politics of the time.

Then Garibaldi disappeared from sight to work for a few years as a merchant seaman, captaining cargo ships in the Pacific. And when he returned to Europe, he presented himself in a somewhat different guise. "Garibaldi's American exile also marks the moment when he leaves his bandit persona behind him," Riall writes. "The Garibaldi who returned to Europe in 1854 after his 'second exile' was a different figure—older, perhaps sadder and certainly more 'respectable' than the youthful romantic, the exotic and picturesque rebel who had fought on the hills above Rome in 1849." He bought a large property on Caprera, a small island off the coast of Sardinia which was part of Piedmontese territory. He gained the right to return by agreeing to stay out of politics, but his lengthy retirement added a new chapter to his legend. Contemporary journalists described him as a modern-day Cincinnatus, the ancient Roman who renounced power to return to his rural farm and had to be persuaded to leave it when the Republic was again in danger.

Garibaldi's isolation from politics was anything but total. Caprera was visited by a steady stream of journalists and acolytes, and its simplicity was described in books and newspapers around the world. He maintained a vast network of correspondents, writing and dictating a mountain of letters that helped to keep his political career and his immense international reputation very much alive. During his period of exile, he gave drafts of his memoirs to supporters in various countries, generating multiple editions of his own story, sometimes in the form of autobiography, other times as heavily reworked biographies. At the same time, Garibaldi began quietly preparing for the next major campaign for unification. The Garibaldi who returned to Europe in the 1850s was decidedly more pragmatic than the one who left in 1849. He distanced himself from Mazzini, a staunch Republican and implacable foe of the Piedmontese monarchy. Instead he decided that joining forces with Piedmont, the only independent Italian state, represented the best opportunity for Italian unification. And his dealings with the Piedmontese—in particular their crafty prime minister Cavour and King Victor Emanuel II—is one of the more complex and controversial chapters of Garibaldi's biography.

Cavour was hardly an Italian nationalist. Like many educated Piedmontese of the time, his French was better than his Italian. The Piedmontese were mainly interested in the territorial expansion of their own little state, and so they were happy, when it suited their purposes, to use Risorgimento rhetoric against the Austrians to further their claims to northern Italy. For the most part, however, they treated hotheaded nationalists such as Mazzini and Garibaldi as dangerous criminals. Cavour placed much greater weight on backroom deals and state-to-state diplomacy, and in 1858 he signed a secret treaty with France in which he agreed to cede Nice and Savoy in exchange for French military support in a war with Austria. French armies were decisive in allowing Piedmont to gain hold of Milan and much of Lombardy in 1859. At the same time, the Piedmontese somewhat reluctantly made Garibaldi a general in their army; but they placed him in charge of a small, poorly trained, ragtag force. Still, he acquitted himself well on the battlefield, winning at least one major victory against Austria. His fame attracted thousands of volunteers, quadrupling the number of his troops.

The conservative, aristocratic Cavour was suspicious of popular movements, but no sooner was the war with Austria over than Garibaldi began to raise funds and men to lead an expedition to aid an uprising in Sicily. The Piedmontese did not prevent the expedition, but they weakened it as much as they could by denying Garibaldi access to arms that one of his subscription campaigns had raised. With a small army of roughly one thousand—the famous *mille* commemorated in almost every Italian city—and equipped with old and inadequate weapons, Garibaldi set out to face the army of the Kingdom of Two Sicilies. Through a combination of military daring, good luck, and the support of the local population, he managed to take Palermo and then the rest of Sicily. He then

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crossed over the mainland and again, with stunning rapidity, defeated the bulk of the Bourbon army, becoming the undisputed master of southern Italy.

Riall sees much merit in the temporary government that Garibaldi established in Sicily. Although he labeled it a dictatorship, Garibaldi enlisted the help of his Sicilian supporters to give the government a fair degree of local participation—it was a regime with democratic and populist elements. "The regime's social and administrative policies were part of an ambitious program of Mazzinian origin, which aimed to 'regenerate' Italy, and which, by encouraging popular identification with the idea of the nation, proposed to unite government and people in a new political religion," Riall writes. "The vision of national belonging proposed by Garibaldi was aimed not just at intellectuals, or just at the literate, middle-class male, but also at those (women, peasants) who were often given a secondary role in the nationalist hierarchy, or at priests, who were often excluded entirely."

In 1860, Garibaldi's fame and status reached its apex. As the head of a large army and the ruler of nearly half of Italy, he might have chosen to dictate, from a position of equality with Victor Emanuel and Cavour, the terms of Italian unification; but he agreed instead to a simple referendum on unification and then disappeared to his island refuge, in effect turning southern Italy over to Piedmontese control. This meant that the new Italian state would be a conservative monarchy with extremely limited popular sovereignty, a highly centralized structure with extremely limited local powers. Many of his supporters were republicans, democrats, and socialists who wanted something very different from subjection to an aristocratic monarchy. And rather than granting Garibaldi's volunteer soldiers places in the new Italian army, the Piedmontese systematically excluded them, throwing away a potentially valuable source of popular legitimacy in favor of a style of governance that in the south resembled a military occupation. It was perhaps the biggest mistake of Garibaldi's career. Riall concludes that "Garibaldi threw away a huge political advantage when he agreed to hand over power to Piedmont and retired 'backstage' to Caprera in November 1860."

After unification, Garibaldi was one of the most vocal critics of the government that he had helped put in place. He moved decisively toward the left, espousing a form of socialism and pushing, unsuccessfully, for universal suffrage. Although most historians have seen Garibaldi's final years as a time of impotence and increasing marginality, Riall argues that there was lasting importance to the opposition he represented. Ironically, it was he, one of Italy's founding fathers, who offered one of the first and most prominent critiques of Italian unification, portraying it as a promise betrayed—a notion that was to remain a powerful articulation of democratic opposition. "The view of Italy as a weak and failed nation is a persistent one and, in the years after national unification, Italy's foundation story was recast as a tragic romance," she writes. "The effect of this polemic on the national discourse was to maintain at its very center the very persuasive contrast between a poetic vision of national belonging and the prosaic disenchantment of Italy's governments.... On the radical side, few used it with more skill or to greater lasting effect than Garibaldi."

Moreover, while Cavour won the battle for political control, in many ways Mazzini and Garibaldi—the losers—defined the terms of the national political discourse, with effects lasting to this day. Their form of national civic religion was so powerful that even reluctant unifiers such as Cavour were forced to try to co-opt it and make it their own. "Cavour was able to trap the democrats and push them politically out of southern Italy," Riall writes. "However, he was far less successful in challenging Garibaldi's appeal and the religion of the Italian nation which the southern dictatorship in Sicily had promoted with such skill and dedication."

Differing somewhat from Gellner, Anderson, and Eric Hobsbawm, who see nationalism as largely an invention imposed from above, Riall sees it as the product of a complex dialogue between popular desires and elite tastemakers. "It tells us that successful nationalist myths are neither genuine nor invented but a compelling blend of both; and that they are neither spontaneous nor imposed, but can far better be characterized as an intricate process of negotiation between actor and audience where the author (or source of authority) is difficult to discover." By offering a sensitive and complicated reading of one case of nationalism and one hero of nationalism, Lucy Riall makes a substantial contribution to the discussion of nationalism itself. ◆

David Novak
HOW IT BEGAN

JESUS IN THE TALMUD
By Peter Schäfer
(Princeton University Press,
210 pp., $24.95)

When *The Passion of the Christ* elicited such great public controversy a few years ago, it raised once again the old question of how Jews and Judaism are portrayed in classical Christian sources, first and foremost in the New Testament. And it raised the new question as to how accurately Mel Gibson's film represented that portrayal. From at least a cursory reading of the New Testament accounts of Jesus's relations with his fellow Jews and with Judaism, the image one retains seems to be largely a negative one (although we are now aware that the picture of Jews and Judaism in the Qur'an is far more negative, and far more dangerous). And in the minds of many people, certainly in the minds of many Jews, Gibson's film made a bad image even worse.

Gibson, whether he knew it or not, drew upon a long history of Christian anti-Judaism in developing his own picture of how badly the Jews treated Jesus, even adding some points not found in the New Testament. Those Christians who are earnest in their desire to have a new and more positive relationship with Jews and with Judaism were embarrassed by Gibson's film and sought to dismiss it, while trying to show more positive Christian precedents for a better Christian-Jewish dispensation. This effort of getting Christians to examine Christian anti-Judaism candidly and critically has been, to a certain extent, the result of the goading of Jewish scholars of Christianity, such as Marcel Simon and Jules Isaac, whose works laid out the evidence of Christian anti-Judaism. It results also from the influence of great Christian scholars such as Edward Flannery and Malcolm Hay, who, after World War II and its devastation of European Jewry, began to respond

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to this challenge with scholarly acumen. This response requires not least that pro-Jewish Christian scholars learn more about Judaism than anti-Jewish Christian scholars in the past knew (or wanted to know), if they are to develop a new and better Christian picture of Judaism as it really is.

Both Christian and Jewish texts have had to be re-examined with the greatest care, so that this rethinking not become an apologetic whitewash of embarrassing traditions rather than an honest, and often painful, re-assessment of them. This process of re-examination and reconstruction has been salutary for both Jews and Christians—for Jews because it has led to a great decrease in Christian contempt for them and for Judaism (and not only from scholars of religion), and for Christians because it has better enabled them to avoid the temptation of modern anti-Semitism, which often turns out to be as anti-Christian as it is anti-Jewish. For this reason, the new rigor and the new candor have great political significance.

This process of rereading the texts of one's own tradition that talk about a close neighbor, an other, demands the very best scholarship. Peter Schäfer is certainly one of the most prominent and most formidable Christian scholars engaged in the new enterprise of looking at Judaism in relation to Christianity. He may well be the most distinguished non-Jewish scholar of classical Jewish sources in the world today. Which is to say, he may be the individual most qualified to deal with a very delicate question that inevitably arises out of the inquiry into what Christians say about Jews and Judaism in their classical sources: what do Jews say about Christians and Christianity in their classical sources? The question becomes more focused when it is directed to what the Jewish sources say about Jesus.

What Jews have said about Jesus tells us how they were thinking about the Christians they encountered, since Jesus is always the central personality in the story that Christians tell about themselves. To think about Christians without talking about Jesus is like thinking about Jews without talking about the Torah. You cannot understand the one without the other. And since the story that Christians tell about themselves is still being told, how Jews have regarded that Christian story in the past will have great influence on the way Jews see that Christian story in the present. That is why Schäfer's fine new book should be of interest to a wide audience, and not only to specialists in the field of the historical interaction of Judaism and Christianity in late antiquity (who will be right to devour it). For one of the book's accomplishments is to suggest that this vexed subject is not at all arcane.

Schäfer's book tells a fascinating story. We need to appreciate how subtle that story is before we can properly ponder its larger implications for the new Jewish-Christian discussion, implications that are more than academic. What Schäfer calls "the Talmud" is the whole corpus of rabbinic literature that was written between the first and the seventh centuries of the Christian Era. Some of that vast literature was written in the land of Israel (then called "Palestine")—first under pagan Roman rule, then under Christian rule after Christianity became the official religion of the Roman Empire in the fourth century—and is known as the Palestinian Talmud. Even more of that vast literature was written in Babylonia, then part of the Persian Empire. When most Jews say "the Talmud," they mean the Babylonian Talmud, called the Bavli.

There were far fewer Christians in Babylonia than there were in Palestine, and those Christians did not pose the political threat to the Jews that the Christians in Palestine did, and so all scholars interested in Jewish views of Christians and Christianity have regarded the Babylonian treatments of the subject to be historically worthless. They have preferred to concentrate their efforts on discussions and allusions in the Palestinian sources. Those sources alone seem to be talking about a real historical phenomenon, which, when we decode it, tells us much about how the Jews saw the Christian community in Palestine, with whom they had real conflicts.

But what does this say about Jesus himself? Since the appearance in 1906 of Albert Schweitzer's extraordinary work *The Quest of the Historical Jesus*, most scholars have not looked for evidence of the Jesus "who really was." All we know about *that* Jesus is what his disciples and their disciples have told us in the New Testament. There are no reliable competing accounts. These treatments of Jesus's birth, career, and death (let alone his reported resurrection) were hardly written to be historical descriptions, even of the type written in antiquity by historians such as Thucydides or Tacitus. Instead they are believers' impressions, which tell us more about the way the things they portray have affected their viewers than about the things themselves. The narratives of the Gospels were not recorded or redacted impartially. These treatments of Jesus are not meant to be accurate, in the empirical or mimetic sense, though of course they are meant to be true.

Assuming that Jewish authors who lived at least a century after Jesus's death did not have the personal contact with Jesus that the authors of the Gospels did, we may imagine that when they speak of Jesus, they are really talking about the community that sees Jesus to be its founder and still-present guide. But if the Palestinian Jews who had no acquaintance with Jesus are only really talking about the community that came after him, how much more so are the Babylonian Jews in their own sources: they did not even know a threatening Christian community, not to mention Jesus himself. In fact, who *are* these Babylonian Jewish sources talking about when they do speak of Jesus? We might say that whereas the Palestinian sources are speaking about a lively ghost, the Babylonian sources seem to be talking about a pure phantom. But this is precisely the view, predominant among scholars, that Peter Schäfer wishes to overturn.

Schäfer builds his argument about Jesus in the Babylonian Talmud on a largely overlooked fact: that "whereas the Palestinian rabbis' (few) statements reveal a relative closeness to the emerging Christian sect … the Bavli's attention is focused on the *person* of Jesus." But how can what the Talmud says about Jesus be of any significance if the Babylonian rabbis were even further removed from the historical Jesus than the Palestinian rabbis before them? Schäfer's answer is that the Babylonian rabbinical texts are dealing not with the historical Jesus, but with the character of Jesus as it was presented in the New Testament, especially in the Gospel of John, which seems to present the most anti-Jewish Jesus of the four Gospels. These treatments are what Schäfer calls "a literary answer to a literary text."

Whereas the Palestinian anti-Christian texts are responding to a threatening social reality, the Babylonian texts are talking about the basic document (the New Testament) of a Christian community that is no longer a threat to the Jews of Babylonia, the Babylonian Christians being as much (if not more) of a marginalized minority as the Jews. Thus, in Schäfer's view, Babylonian Jewish statements about Jesus could be more direct than the Palestinian statements, and they could be nastier. Schäfer shows all this with dazzling erudition and critical insight. He also shows how these Babylonian sources condemned and ridiculed

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the New Testament accounts of Jesus's birth, powers, and supposed innocence at his trial. Since the local Christians in Babylonia were as far removed from the historical Jesus as the local Jews, having only the Jesus of the New Testament, the Jewish criticism of Jesus in Babylonia could attack Christians at their most vulnerable point. In the end, the political power of Christians over Jews made a huge difference in the ways Jews could conduct their anti-Christian polemic.

The most vivid example of the anti-Christian polemic of the Babylonian Talmud can be seen in its treatment of the virgin birth of Jesus as presented in the New Testament. The intent of Christians in claiming that Jesus was born of the Virgin Mary was to emphasize that Jesus's father was God himself—that the earthly Jesus, and not just the heavenly Christ (the second person of the Trinity, who has no mother), was truly the son of God. Mary's virginity was important so that no one might entertain the notion that her fiancé, Joseph, really fathered her child Jesus.

In contrast to this official Christian version of the circumstances of Jesus's conception and birth, the Babylonian Talmud presents, in Schäfer's words, "a highly ambitious and devastating counternarrative to the infant story of the New Testament." In the rabbinical text that Schäfer selects to illustrate this point, it is stated that "his mother was Miriam [Mary].... This is as they say about her in Pumbeditha: This one turned away from (was unfaithful to) her husband." This being assumed, the Talmud identifies Mary's lover and Jesus's real father to be a man named Pandera—clearly a Roman name. In this account (which had an enormous impact upon some medieval Jewish polemical writings), Mary's lover and Jesus's true father is not only not his mother's lawful husband, he is also a gentile—indeed, a hated Roman. From this Schäfer infers that "if the Bavli takes it for granted that [Jesus's] mother was an adulteress, then the logical conclusion follows that he was a *mamzer*, a bastard or illegitimate child." In this view, Jesus is as far from being the son of God and a pure virgin as is possible in Jewish imagination.

It is no wonder that this text is "only preserved in the uncensored manuscripts and printed editions of the Bavli." Those were the versions of the Talmud published at times and in places where Christians had great political power over Jews and were using it harshly against them. It is thus easy to see why the Jews would want to emend such an inflammatory text, in the interests of security and self-preservation—and why the Christians would make the Jews emend such a text so that their Jewish underlings would be unable to use it to buttress their anti-Christianity. No doubt, many pro-Jewish Christians and many pro-Christian Jews today would like to forget that such a text ever existed in its original form.

But why did the Babylonian Jews go to the trouble of denying the veracity of a text that mattered only to a small Christian community that had no power over Jews (no power of the sort that Palestinian Christians came to enjoy once Christians became members of the official religion of the Roman Empire)? Schäfer gives two answers to this question. Unlike his analysis of the literary evidence, where he has some important data at his disposal, the causal explanation involves much more speculation on his part. Yet Schäfer is not a hasty or arrogant historian; he says only what he believes the evidence entitles him to say. Would that more historians were as modest.

Schäfer's first answer to the question is psychological and political; more precisely, it concerns the influence of the political environment upon psychological motivation. In his view, the Jews of Babylonia could say about Christianity, in the person of Jesus, what their Palestinian brethren could not say because of the dangers involved. Schäfer calls the Babylonian declaration "a proud and self-confident message," one quite different from the "defense mechanisms" that the Palestinian rabbis had to employ in their political prudence. It was a "proud proclamation" of "a new and self-confident Diaspora community."

Schäfer's second answer to this question is more concretely political. Here he notes that in the Persian Empire, both Judaism and Christianity were minority religions—islands of monotheism in a sea of Zoroastrian dualism (which affirmed a good god in conflict with a bad god, as opposed to the one good God affirmed by Judaism and Christianity). The two monotheistic religions were highly suspect in the eyes of the polytheistic Zoroastrian Persian or Sasanian rulers. Indeed, older polemics of Roman pagans against Jews and Christians castigated them both for their monotheism. From these political facts, Schäfer speculates that the anti-Christian polemics of the Jews might be part of "a very vivid and fierce conflict between two competing 'religions' under the suspicious eye of the Sasanian authorities."

Yet the Christians, however weak they were in the Persian Empire, no doubt had contacts with, and loyalties to, their far more numerous and more powerful brethren in the Roman Empire, and so it is plausible to suggest that the Persian authorities would have regarded Christians to be more of a political threat than their religious rivals, the Jews. Schäfer thinks that Babylonian Jewish putdowns of Jesus might have been a way of diverting official Persian suspicion away from themselves and their religion toward Christians and their religion. In other words, the anti-Christianity of the Bavli was a way for the Babylonian Jews to curry favor with their Persian overlords by castigating a "negative other." And here Schäfer ends his fascinating book.

Peter Schäfer's historical research and textual interpretation have implications, obviously, beyond the academy. This is a subject that profoundly affects Christian and Jewish self-understandings and mutual understandings. I can see three possible ramifications of Schäfer's extraordinary scholarship in the context of the current Jewish-Christian relationship today.

First, at the most troubling level, Schäfer's work might encourage those Jews who would be happy to learn that there were times when Jews were able to "get even" with their Christian enemies: a kind of schadenfreude. In this way Schäfer's work might hinder the emergence of a more positive Jewish-Christian relationship. (Not that he is guided by such an anxiety in his scholarship, of course.) Such people could use his work to encourage Jews to speak similarly again, now that Christians are much weaker than they have been in the past. But it is naïve to think that self-respecting Christians will simply sit back and not answer their Jewish critics in kind, which would easily revive all the old animosity against Jews and Judaism. Taken this way, Schäfer's work could also encourage Christian "hard-liners" to insist again that an animosity to Christians and Christianity is ubiquitous in Judaism and endemic to it, and that it cannot be overcome by the Jews. Why should Christians be any better when speaking of Jews and Judaism than Jews have been when speaking of Christians and Christianity?

ANTHONY RUSSO

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Second, Schäfer's work might embarrass those Jews who like to dwell on the tradition of Christian anti-Judaism in all its ugly rhetoric, and imply that the Jews have largely kept themselves above any such ugliness. For Schäfer demonstrates just the opposite. One might even speculate that had Jews gained the same kind of political power over Christians that Christians gained over Jews, Jews might well have translated their polemical rhetoric against Christianity (which, after all, posed a tremendous threat to the legitimacy of Judaism) into the political persecution of Christians, much the same way that Christians translated their polemical rhetoric against Judaism into the political persecution of Jews. Victimization does not confer sainthood. The Jews lacked the opportunity, but perhaps not the motive or the will, to practice the type of intolerance that they experienced at the hands of the Christians.

Lastly, Schäfer's very original scholarship in the area of Jewish-Christian relations might have the effect of ending at last the "guilt trip" that some Jews have laid on Christians, according to which theological contempt and religious intolerance is a uniquely Christian problem. (It is worth noting, of course, that in our own day militant Islam makes Christian anti-Judaism a less important threat to Jews.) Jews of this mind also want a positive relationship with Christians. Yet the fact is that, at least on the level of ideas, Jews and Christians have a similar problem with the notions about each other that emerge from their respective traditions. So at a time when both religions lack the power to hurt each other politically, there remains only the arena of ideas in which to build a new and better relationship or to destroy it. For this reason, this arena should be cultivated, and protected, and allowed to grow freely and honestly.

Whatever Peter Schäfer's extra-scholarly intentions, his great scholarship now provides Jews and Christians interested in developing a new and better relationship with a way to work through many of the hateful things that we have said about each other in the past, but without pretending that this bad past was not as bad as it really was or that it can simply be forgotten. Reading *Jesus in the Talmud* in this way might well provide Western readers who live by either the Talmud or the New Testament, and who want to live in peace and maybe even trust with their closest historical-philosophical neighbors, with a great intellectual challenge. The sources that Schäfer adduces are virulent and dangerous, but his analysis of them leaves one unexpectedly full of hope. ◆

Ingrid D. Rowland
THE ENLIGHTENER

HISTORY OF THE ART OF ANTIQUITY
By Johann Joachim Winckelmann
Translated by Harry Francis Mallgrave
(The Getty Research Institute,
446 pp., $67.50)

Although Johann Joachim Winckelmann is often called "the father of modern art history," that paternal claim belongs by now to another generation. For the German-educated refugees who escaped to London and the United States before World War II and effectively created the discipline of art history for the English-speaking world, Winckelmann, a German resident in Italy in the eighteenth century, was certainly a symbolic father for their own displacement and their own passions. Like Winckelmann, the bibliophile banker Aby Warburg, the onetime lawyer Erwin Panofsky, and the art historians Fritz Saxl, Ernst Gombrich, and Richard Krautheimer all believed that the study of art was an activity for everyone, an enterprise to be communicated to a greater public with the utmost clarity, enthusiasm, and wit. And this they (and many others) did, both in their native German and in their adopted language, to memorable effect.

That generation of mid-twentieth-century refugees was a generation of intellectual giants, and like most giants they were also tyrants. It is not entirely surprising that their much-put-upon successors have followed their lead with less than perfect docility. Superbly educated in a plethora of languages ancient and modern, those elders of the twentieth-century diaspora had learned how to use language as a means of persuasion. Their epigones, less confidently erudite, often use words to shield their own insecurity, bandying about terms like "ekphrasis" when "description" will do, creating such lumbering Greco-Latin sports as "contextualize," or transferring Platonic abstractions such as "the good" uncomfortably to English.

It is the state of contemporary art history—its Oedipal rebellions, its verbosities, its insecurities—that drives Alex Potts, who has written the introduction to this important new volume, to divide his remarks in two: first, a straightforward presentation of Winckelmann's life (1717–1768) and work, clearly written and informative, addressed to general readers; and then a coda of special pleading, in contemporary academic prose, that absolves Winckelmann in advance of such crimes against humanity as naïve positivism, Romantic aestheticism, and the Holocaust:

> It would be misleading, however, to see … Winckelmann's history of art as prefiguring a potentially reactionary aestheticizing of history in which the narrative seeks to assimilate the complexities of the social and political to some artistic norm.… Nor should Winckelmann's image of early Greek sculpture be confused with the reactionary celebrations of the antique that reached their nadir with the Nazi instrumentalizing of a mythologized classical past.

Within all this verbiage, conspicuously absent from the rest of his introduction, Potts is arguing, to be sure, for the exercise of good sense, both common and historical; but when these potential readers are prepared to blame Hitler on Praxiteles, he might be better advised to preach, like St. Anthony, to the fish. No useful connection, paternal or philosophical, can link the piercing clarity of Winckelmann's ideas to academic art history's current penchant for simplistic thought clad in pompous language. As Winckelmann himself observed of such "debased taste" in another era: "Its prime attribute was the pestilence that in our time is called pedantry. [Poets] strove to appear more the scholar than the poet and to establish themselves with archaic and foreign words and expressions … to appear possessed rather than inspired and to be understood after sweat and tears rather than to please." There is much to be said, therefore, for having *History of the Art of Antiquity* in English, as limpid and persuasive in Harry Francis Mallgrave's translation as Winckelmann is in his own German. Two and a half centuries on, his writing is still a breath of fresh Enlightenment air.

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Winckelmann's powers of persuasion lie not only in his language, but also in his utter familiarity with his subject. In his position as secretary to Cardinal Alessandro Albani, from 1758 to his death ten years later, he collected, examined, and supervised the restoration of ancient artifacts, sculptures, and inscriptions, as well as the occasional fragment of painting. He did all this while living with the cardinal among the ruins of ancient Rome, in an antiquities-stuffed modern villa whose grounds, as they knew full well, bordered on those of the ancient villas of Lucullus, Maecenas, and Sallust. Within his sanctum, Winckelmann pursued handsome young men as ardently as Jupiter pursued Ganymede, or Apollo Hyacinth, or the Emperor Hadrian his Bithynian friend Antinous—in fact, the youth's petulant profile, in colossal marble relief, looms over a fireplace in the Villa Albani. Like many of the eighteenth-century Enlightenment's champions of reason, Winckelmann was a wild man in real life, knifed at fifty-one in the port of Trieste by a small-time criminal he had befriended.

This Saxon expatriate wrote *History of the Art of Antiquity*, published in 1764, to supplement his meager salary from the cardinal. He wrote in German rather than Latin in order to attract a larger public; within two years his book would be translated into French, and thereafter into Italian. Yet his urge to put art into a historical sequence was as old as Rome itself. The Romans had been acutely, sometimes guiltily aware of the cultural debts they owed to their Etruscan ancestors, and to the Greek and Egyptian neighbors they first admired and then conquered. The ancient Romans developed a voracious appetite for antiques: Cicero famously prosecuted a corrupt former governor of Sicily for looting the island's artistic treasures. (Robert Harris has re-created the political background for this incisive early statement about cultural property in his novel *Imperium*.) The architect and writer Vitruvius, Cicero's younger contemporary, tracked the changes in taste that led the Greeks to prefer taller, narrower columns and the Romans to invent an imaginative style of painting that defied, at least in his eyes, the laws of nature. A century later, the insatiably curious Pliny the Elder (who died investigating the eruption of Vesuvius) traced the history of Greek sculpture in the midst of a disquisition on stone.

Winckelmann also followed more modern precedents. In a letter circa 1519, emulating the example of the ancient Romans (especially Vitruvius), the Italian painter Raphael had described the changes in art and architecture from antiquity through the Middle Ages up to his own time, a moment at which he and his contemporaries believed that they had managed at last to equal the ancients' artistic achievements, but in the service of Christian faith. Like ancient Roman writers, Raphael saw the history of art as a history of progress. (Interestingly, this was the only area of human existence in which the ancient Greeks and Romans admitted that there might have been a pattern of improvement; in every other respect life had been going steadily downhill since the Golden Age.) A generation after Raphael, Giorgio Vasari presented a history of modern art through his *Lives of the Most Illustrious Painters, Sculptors, and Architects*, a masterfully amusing account of the brilliant eccentrics who created the Renaissance, from tempestuous Cimabue to sex-mad Raphael and grumpy Michelangelo. Local patriotism shaped every aspect of Vasari's opinions, which emphasized the Etruscan contribution to ancient civility and singled out his fellow Tuscan Michelangelo as the consummate artist.

The air of mystery that surrounds the Etruscans today was no mystery to Vasari and his neighbors; they were the ancestors of modern Tuscans, pure and simple. Sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Italians had definite ideas about Etruscan art, Etruscan religion, and an Etruscan language whose alphabet was almost entirely legible but whose inscriptions yielded up strange-sounding words: *larth* (a proper name misread as a political office) or *avils* (correctly read as "years"). The unusual forms were usually assumed to be derivatives of Hebrew, the language of Adam. Between the fifteenth and eighteenth centuries, a series of enterprising forgers made helpful improvements on the archaeological and literary record, revealing the Etruscan hand in everything from Doric architecture to Galileo's astronomy. Hence when Cardinal Albani's German secretary decided to write in German about the superiority of the Greeks, the decision had a political dimension as well as a cultural one.

The usual word for Germans in Vasari's day was "barbarians" or "Goths," neither term a compliment. Goths and Vandals had destroyed the Roman Empire. Germans in Vasari's Italy gulped down wine as if it were beer and became indecorously drunk. A German friar, Martin Luther, had brought on the Protestant Reformation. German mercenaries had sacked Rome in 1527 in a six-month orgy of greed and violence. But by Winckelmann's time, two centuries later, a German presence in Rome was better accepted, favored by a century of relatively peaceful conditions (the Thirty Years' War between Catholics and Protestants had been settled in 1648) and the growing tradition of the Grand Tour, which attracted wealthy young visitors from France, Germany, and Britain to Naples, Rome, Florence, and Venice.

Winckelmann was a cobbler's son with no advantages but his brain. He had served as a schoolteacher and then as the state librarian of Saxony. His own trip from Dresden to Rome in 1755 hinged on his conversion to Catholicism before his sponsor—Cardinal Alberico Archinto, papal nuncio to Saxony—would agree to add him to the official entourage. This conversion, as Winckelmann continued to assure his Protestant friends, was more practical than spiritual, and it served its purpose, earning him a position in Rome first with Archinto, and then, on Archinto's death in 1758, with Albani.

To a certain extent—and his German readers realized this immediately—Winckelmann's enthusiasm for the Greeks was a patriotic enthusiasm; they had been as foreign to Etruria and Rome as he was foreign to Italy. By the same curious analogy, in the hands of this halfhearted Catholic convert the Greeks became, in effect, the Protestant reformers of the ancient world. With his own eyes full of Rome's Baroque wonders, Winckelmann contrasts the clean lines of ancient Greek art with Alexandrian decadence and Roman "weapons and barbarity," extending his lament to what he sees as analogous developments in his own time:

> In the last century, a noxious epidemic became rife in Italy, as it did in all the lands where the sciences were practiced. It filled the brains of the learned with evil vapors and brought

The Rounded Eyes of the Pagan God

Are exitways for the Soul—
and so the eyes half in awe, half-dazed
to house so great a magnanimity
never close.

Rock god with your look
of surprise. Be calm. The Soul peers out
but rarely goes.

GERI DORAN

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> their blood to a feverish boil, imparting a bombastic and toilsome wit to literature at precisely the same time that the same epidemic appeared among the artists.… Bernini and Borromini forsook nature and antiquity in painting, sculpture, and architecture just as Marino and others did in poetry.

Intentional or inadvertent as it may have been, Winckelmann's assimilation of ancient Rome to Catholic Italy, and Greece to a contrasting, older, purer ideal, would dominate Northern European thinking about ancient—and Italian Baroque—art for generations.

Remarkably, this forceful thinker's own ideas about Greek aesthetics were based almost entirely on his experience of Roman works. Some might have been created for Roman patrons by Greek craftsmen, such as the famous sculpture of Laocoön and his sons writhing in the coils of enormous snakes, signed, in Greek, by three sculptors from Rhodes. But many others, as Winckelmann recognized, had been deliberately executed in an older style:

> Nonetheless, one cannot exercise too much caution in evaluating the age of works, and a figure that seems to be Etruscan or from an earlier period of Greek art is not always so. It may be a copy or imitation of earlier works that served many Greek artists as a model over and over again.… Or in the case of divine figures … it seems that the older style was sometimes adopted to arouse greater reverence.

The eye that could use such problematic data to single out the distinctive qualities of Egyptian, Etruscan, Greek, Alexandrian, and Roman art was an eye of extraordinary discernment, as we can see when Winckelmann intersperses his historical remarks with incisive descriptions of the works he has seen in Roman collections. After all these centuries, *History of the Art of Antiquity* still serves as a splendid guidebook.

It is a guidebook, however, in which Michelangelo does not tower as the consummate master. To Winckelmann, this most Tuscan of artists partakes too much of Etruscan taste:

> This nation … tends toward trifles. This is evident in their style of writing, which is often very stilted and affected, and appears dry and barren against the pure clarity of the Romans; the same is especially apparent in art. The style of their ancient artists can still be seen in the works of their descendants, and the impartial and discerning eye will find it in the drawing of Michelangelo, the greatest among them.… By contrast, the best Roman artists, Raphael and his school … always come closer, in the lightness of their figures, to the Greeks.

Winckelmann's idea of a truly beautiful statue is not Michelangelo's tense, wiry *David*, but rather the *Apollo Belvedere*, a sculpture whose reputation for divine perfection was already well established by the late fifteenth century, when Cardinal Giuliano della Rovere, the future Pope Julius II, captured it for his own collection. When the American artist Benjamin West came to Italy in 1760 (that is, while Winckelmann was still writing his *History*), his Italian hosts took him to see this statue, eager to discover what impact the pure embodiment of beauty might have on a man born so far from civilization. West, no fool, confounded them by exclaiming, "How like a Mohawk warrior!"

It is easy to see what West meant. Clad only in cape and sandals, his long hair done up in a bow, Apollo, the god of music, sunshine, and plagues, strides forth with the barest of smiles on his handsome face. His lithe, barely muscled form inspired some of Winckelmann's most ecstatic prose:

> His build is elevated above the human, and his stance bears witness to the fullness of his grandeur. An eternal springtime, like that of the blissful Elysian Fields, clothes the alluring virility of mature years with a pleasing youth and plays with soft tenderness upon the lofty structure of his limbs. Go with thy spirit into the realm of incorporeal beauties and seek to become a creator of a heavenly nature, so that the spirit might be filled with beauties that rise above nature—for there is nothing mortal, nothing that betokens miserable humanity. No veins or sinews heat and move this body, but rather a heavenly spirit that, flowing like a gentle stream, has saturated, as it were, every contour of this figure.

Beautiful, ruthless, and cruelly imperturbable, Apollo performed precisely this cool seduction on his ancient worshipers; he was a healer as well as a destroyer, and hence not to be resisted. Although Winckelmann responds to the ancient god's image with an aesthetic rather than a religious rapture, the *Apollo Belvedere* had stood in the Vatican for more than two centuries in part because Apollo was seen as a forerunner of Christ, the brilliant son of God who comes to earth in a burst of light. In a real sense, Winckelmann's reverie before the statue is a spiritual exercise, a disciplined journey of senses and imagination in the tradition, if not to the purposes, of Ignatius Loyola, and it captures the continuing religious significance of a work of art that has embodied something more than human for two thousand years. "In gazing upon this masterpiece of art, I forget all else, and I myself adopt an elevated stance, in order to be worthy of gazing upon it," he wrote. "My chest seems to expand with veneration and to heave like those I have seen swollen as if by the spirit of prophecy, and I feel myself transported to Delos and to the Lycian groves, places Apollo honored with his presence—for my figure seems to take on life and movement, like Pygmalion's beauty."

Winckelmann's rapturous eye extended not only to great works of ancient art. Like most of his contemporaries, he also delighted in antiquity's smaller fragments: tiny engraved gems, cameos, jewels, painted pots, ancient coins with exquisite miniatures of Caesar, Pompey, Cleopatra, emperors, gods, temples, elephants. Engravings of these small finds decorated the first edition of his book, and they provide him with glimpses into the ancient world that are no less penetrating in their own way than the insights he gains from the great statues or the epics of Homer. Although *History of the Art of Antiquity* is filled with historical, moral, and aesthetic judgments, it is still more filled with wonder at the ingenuity of people who lived so long ago.

Popular, readable, concise, Winckelmann's great work presents its own point of view with persuasive authority; at the same time, it also enforces a slower, more thoughtful pace on our own appreciation of ancient art. As a late arrival in Rome (he was nearly forty), Johann Joachim Winckelmann never forgot that the survival of each one of these works, no matter how humble, is a miracle, and his work devotes an attention to each one of them that can only be called loving. His fascination with them, and with the lost cultures that created them, is irresistibly contagious. We could do worse than to pause, as he did, before the ancient statues that crowd our museums, and "adopt an elevated stance, in order to be worthy of gazing," transporting ourselves, if only momentarily, to Greek isles and Roman gardens. The statues are happy to tell their stories, if only we will linger long enough to let them. ◆

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WASHINGTON DIARIST

Climates

Was I alone a few Sundays ago in thinking that the photograph of Sanford Weill on the front page of *The New York Times* was much too small? I mean, it took up only about a third of the page, though it was nicely centered, above and below the fold, so that the news of all the other kinds of people in the world that week, the worried and the hurting kinds, could revolve condignly around the image of the money man smiling in self-congratulation beneath the beatifying halo of the ceiling lights at Carnegie Hall. If ever there was an emblem of the Manhattan cosmology, this page was it. And there is more to come: The page announced that this glorification of the grotesquely rich was only the first installment in a series excitingly called "Age of Riches: The .01 Percent." No doubt this latest bath of pluto-porn at the *Times* will be partly justified as an interest in the philanthropic consequences of the new fortunes; and while it is true that the generosity of some of the new rich is extraordinary, it is also true that charity is not economic justice. (It is the absence of economic justice that makes charity necessary.) I wonder how the largesse angle will handle the obscene Stephen Schwarzman, who is very bad for the Jews.

Then, a few days ago, though not in this series, the *Times* delivered another piece that would have made Veblen giggle. It was called "CEO libraries reveal keys to success," and it disclosed that corporate success is linked to the reading, or at least to the collecting, of great books. "As soon as a book enters our home it is guaranteed a permanent place in our lives," one venture capitalist preened. "I have never been able to part with even one. . . ." Amazing! Another CEO "has stocked his cabin in the woods with the collected works of Aristotle," which is very nice for Aristotle, especially in the summer. Michael Milken has created a whole library on Galileo, "the renegade who was jailed in his time but redeemed by history." My favorite pseud of all was Sidney Harman, who remarked with serene idiocy that "poets are our original systems thinkers" and, to give the measure of his mental seriousness, boasted that "[f]or two years [he] would take down from the shelf *The City of God* by E.L. Doctorow, read the novel slowly, return it to the shelves, and then take it down again for his next trip." It is *that good*.

I know that the rich will always be with us, but they can be unbelievably tedious. (I recall a wealthy acquaintance of mine who once pronounced to his table that "Beethoven is, in my judgment, a great composer.") Since, in our tacky gilded age, only the rich seem to be getting richer, the comedy of the fascination with themselves and their deals and their toys is not altogether hilarious (it is, I hasten to add, a bipartisan fascination: There are many conservatives who pray to capitalism, but nobody slavers over mammon like the Clintons); and since the rich tend to live like lemmings, the most expensive conformists in the annals of mankind, they are not particularly stimulating to humanistic observation. What sort of sympathy or solidarity is one supposed to have for such people? Of course there are exceptions, and those are my friends. But for moral and imaginative reasons, I will stand with the 99.9 percent. I will even dig out my crumpled old copy of Michael Harrington from my mother's garage, the one I bought at the Eighth Street Bookshop (on the same day, I weirdly recall, that I first heard Gene Clark sing "For a Spanish Guitar") many years before I discovered a place called "poolside." After all, the gilded age is very partially gilded. I understand why Americans are interested in winners, but I am developing a lively interest in losers. I want to know what *they* know. Their anxieties seem more fundamental. No, I do not intend to idealize the poor. I am not unsophisticated! I intend only to remember that the poor exist; and to dream about a Democrat who cares equally about national security and social insecurity—to dream on . . .

But back to genocide. If I were a Janjaweed, and could read as well as rape, I would be quite heartened by reports of the latest brilliant idea about the suffering in Darfur. The idea to which I refer is that the cause of the atrocity is climate change. This grandiose hypothesis has been popularized by Ban Ki-moon, who wrote last month that "[t]here is a very strong link between land degradation, desertification, and conflict in Darfur. Northern Darfur—where exponential population growth and related environmental stress have created the conditions for conflict to be triggered and sustained by political, tribal, and ethnic differences—can be considered a tragic example of the social breakdown that can result from ecological collapse." I do not doubt that there is some distant truth to this analysis. I am not a close student of ecology or of Africa. But the question of the causality of evil is not only an empirical matter, it is also a philosophical matter; and I do not believe that evil, which is to say, human identity, can be explained entirely by reference to material factors. The secretary-general's view is just another helping of the economicism of our day; and it accords nicely with the greening of the Western mind, for which global warming amounts to a unified field theory of all the world's ills. A few years ago nobody knew about carbon, and now carbon is all anybody knows. Intellectually, this has a certain desertifying effect. For well-fed people are as capable of savagery as ill-fed people, though more people should certainly be fed. The underground lake that has just been discovered in Darfur will not nullify the cultures of the place, which sooner or later, and no doubt with the assistance of Western troops, will have to find reasons for co-existence on their own grounds, consistent with the fact of the self-interpreting character of human life. There is also a practical problem: to defer the ending of a genocide to a rectification of the Earth's climate is to become indifferent to it. There are many types of causes, as the Aristotelian tycoon in the woods will tell you, and not all of them are similarly hospitable to political correction, to the efficiencies of foreign policy. The only thing that will save the wretched of the Sudanese desert is for humans to act directly, not for the Earth to act indirectly. We are not the Earth. We have a reason footprint.

Leon Wieseltier

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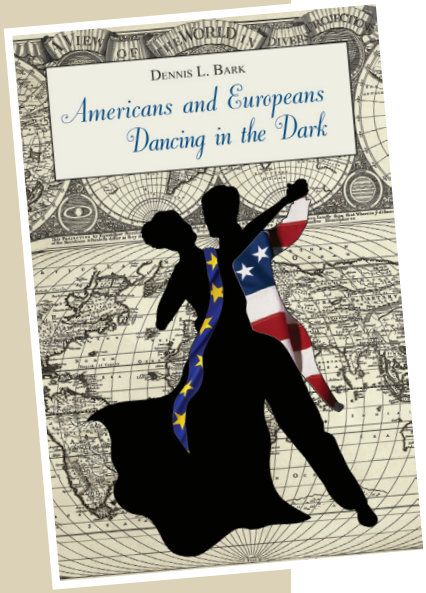

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Dennis L. Bark, a senior fellow at the Hoover Institution, is a historian and political scientist in the field of European studies.

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